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THE TIMES

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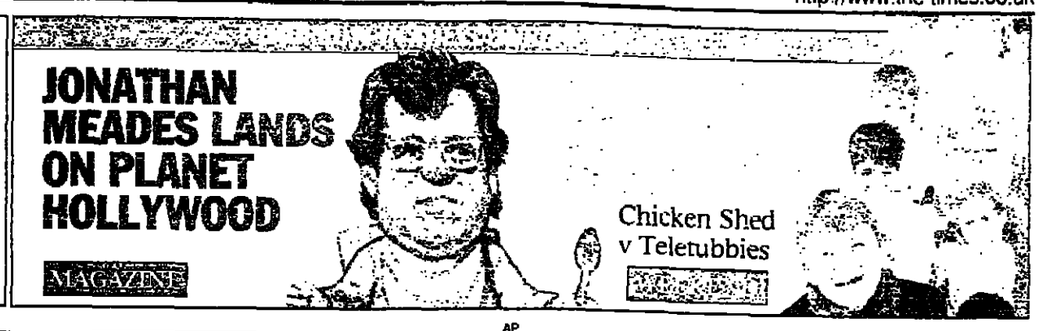

Bosnia shoot-out at dawn

SAS raid nets war crimes suspects

FROM TOM WALKER IN STARI VITEZ AND TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

SAS TROOPS joined Dutch marines in pre-dawn raids in central Bosnia yesterday, arresting two Croats suspected of war crimes, one of whom was injured in a shoot-out in his bedroom.

The operation, which was planned over several months, belied Nato's claim that war criminals are only arrested during the course of normal duties for troops of the Bosnian Stabilisation Force.

SAS troops spearheaded the raids. The Dutch soldiers had been in Bosnia less than a week after undergoing special training in America.

Nato sources in Sarajevo said yesterday's arrests could be the prelude to an operation to seize "big fish" war crimes suspects still at large, the wartime Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. Dr Karadzic is in the Serb stronghold of Pale and General Mladic is in Han Pijesak in eastern Bosnia.

There are about 5,000 British troops involved in the Nato-led peacekeeping operation. The Americans have about 8,400 soldiers in Bosnia and another 700 in Croatia. The Dutch have 1,000 in Bosnia.

The arrests caused turmoil in central Bosnia, where relations between Croats and Muslims have deteriorated sharply in recent months. In the ruined former Muslim-dominated village of Ahmici, an angry crowd of about 100 Croats surrounded the hillside villa of Vlatko Kupreskic, the 39-year old suspect injured in the raid.

A mile away, on the road into the region's main Croatian town, Vitez, another mob faced a Dutch military cordon. The house of the second suspect, Anto Furundzija, was inaccessible.

Mr Kupreskic's distraught wife, Ljubica, 35, speaking by telephone, said troops had thrown stun grenades through the balcony window of their home at about 1am. The couple awoke in a haze of smoke and noise. She said all she could remember was that shots were being pumped into her husband who writhed in agony on the floor.

"There's blood all over the place, come and look," she screamed. "My husband is no criminal, he plays guitar."

Major Peter Clarke, a Nato spokesman in Sarajevo, said Mr Kupreskic had opened fire with an automatic rifle on the troops in his bedroom and was shot in the shoulder, arm and leg.

Mr Furundzija apparently surrendered without a struggle, and was on his way to The Hague as news of the raids became known in Sarajevo. Mr Kurpeskic was treated at a Dutch military hospital before he too was taken to The Hague.

Both men have been linked with the massacre of Muslims in Ahmici in April 1993, which claimed 103 lives, 33 of them women and children. Many of the victims were burned alive as Croats belonging to a notorious paramilitary band known as "The Jokers", razed the village. Mr Furundzija, was allegedly the leader of the band.

President Clinton announced yesterday that American troops would remain in Bosnia beyond the June deadline for Nato withdrawal, prompting immediate protests from Republicans on Capitol Hill. The decision, which had been anticipated for months, came days before a scheduled 12-hour visit by Mr Clinton to the US contingent in Bosnia.

Privately, the White House conceded that US forces would remain in the Balkans for several years. The President said he would set no further deadline for withdrawal. "The progress in Bosnia is unmistakable, but it is not yet irreversible," he said. "We have learnt the hard way in this century that Europe's stability and America's security are joined. If we pull out before the job is done, Bosnia will almost certainly fall back into a war every bit as violent as the last one."

AP

Katalina Meyer, left, and her friend Zohra Lahrizi, for whom she went back into the flames. Both women died

Socialite dies rescuing friends

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

ONE of New York's richest women, Catalina Meyer, was being hailed yesterday as a true heroine after she died in her burning five-storey mansion while trying to save the life of an actress friend trapped by flames.

Mrs Meyer, 60, had already saved the lives of five other people, including her 82-year-old husband, Alvin. Her death has devastated New York socialites, for whom she was an unequalled hostess. Her parties included guests as varied as the writer Norman Mailer, the supermodel Christy Turlington, and the former Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega.

Mrs Meyer's art collection, said to be worth millions of pounds, was also consumed in the fire.

The blaze at the Upper East Side mansion — a neo-classical 19th century building listed as "notable" by the American Institute of Architects, and recently valued at $15 million (£9.3 million) was caused by a short circuit in Christmas lights draped over the facade. A spark set fire to the drapes in a third floor room at 4am on Wednesday.

Awakened by fumes from the fire, Mrs Meyer, who was in the master bedroom on the same floor, led her husband to safety down three flights of stairs. As the flames began to flicker up the stairwell, she awakened her three Guatemalan servants, urging them to save themselves.

After taking her husband outside, Mrs Meyer remembered that Zohra Lahrizi, a Moroccan actress and friend, was still on the top floor, with the daughter of a friend from Russia. Ignoring the pleas of Carlos Ramirez, her butler, she pushed her way indoors again, intent on saving her guests' lives.

An asthmatic, she struggled to the fifth floor just in time to help the Russian woman escape by a fire escape at the back of the building. But by the time she reached Ms Lahrizi's room, they were caught in a fire trap. Firefighters arrived just as the women leapt to their deaths from a window, their hair and bodies aflame. Both were impaled on an iron fence below.

Thomas Van Essen, New York's Fire Commissioner, described Mrs Meyer as a "true heroine". He said she and Ms Lahrizi would have jumped from the window because "it had to be like an oven up there".

Yesterday, tributes poured in for Mrs Meyer, who also had the distinction of being one of the first women stockbrokers on Wall Street. The artist Larry Rivers, a particular friend, many of whose works were destroyed in the fire, said: "She was a social creature beyond belief, feeding 40 people every weekend. Her tables looked like Dutch still lifes — 8,000 things on the table. It was beautiful."

Firemen at the ruined New York mansion

Princess and Dodi spoke of marriage in 'last interview'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A FRENCH magazine yesterday published what it claims was the last interview given by Diana, Princess of Wales, and Dodi Fayed.

The Princess and Fayed are quoted at length in *Paris-Match*, speaking intimately about their relationship and the possibility of marriage and children. The magazine says that the interview was conducted in the Côte d'Azur, where the Princess and Fayed were on holiday last summer, just a few weeks before the car crash in which they died in Paris on August 31.

Paris-Match insists "there is no doubt about the authenticity" of its "exclusive" interview but, since the interviewer remains anonymous and the specific place and time of the meeting have not been given, the truth of the report remains questionable.

"My feelings for Dodi are deep and I believe in the sincerity of his own feelings ... today I dream of sincerity and love," the Princess is quoted as saying. She also reportedly talked to the nameless interviewer about the "wreckage" of her marriage to the Prince of Wales.

Fayed is reported as saying: "I have never known such harmony. My dream ... why not, in the end, make a marriage of love?"

When asked about the possibility of having another child, the Princess is said to have laughed and replied: "Don't you think I'm too old? I imagine that to be a mother and a fulfilled woman at the same time, that must be real happiness."

The interview, headlined "Diana and Dodi — The Confession", is prefaced by Roger Thérond, the managing editor of *Paris-Match*, who claims that, the day after the crash, he was contacted by "a person that I know and admire". He quotes this person as telling him that the interview was to help the couple to answer the media's questions.

Paris-Match does not say why it has allowed four months to elapse before publishing its "scoop", nor why the author has not been identified.

The tenor, content and language of the question-and-answer session is remarkably similar to an interview given by the Princess to Annick Cojean of the Parisian daily *Le Monde* and published five days before her death.

In both interviews the Princess is reported as saying that she had considered leaving Britain and living abroad because of media pressure, but had decided to stay to be near her two sons.

In the *Paris-Match* interview, she also speaks of the criticism she had endured, her desire to be "understood", her work among "the weak, the ill and the poor", her belief that she was closer to "modest people than high society" and the rigidity of the Royal Family.

"I did not know when I joined this family that being natural would seem so suspect to the permanent obervers of one's acts and gestures," she is quoted as saying in *Paris-Match*. "Nothing is worse than to suffer betrayal in love when one is young, very naive and very in love."

☐ Mohamed Al Fayed, the father of Dodi, is launching his own investigation into the crash that killed the couple and has hired a former police investigator to head it, according to reports in Paris yesterday. *(AP)*

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Bank chief quits over tax evasion

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE chairman of the City merchant bank Dresdner Kleinwort Benson resigned yesterday after allegations of tax evasion.

Hansgeorg Hofmann, 54, and just nine months in the job, has been under pressure to step down after admitting that he was negotiating with the German tax authorites over millions of marks of undeclared taxes.

Under British law, Herr Hofmann could have faced an investigation by the Bank of England, which can remove banking directors it does not regard as "fit and proper".

The German case is believed to centre on undeclared proceeds from stock investments held in Swiss banks, but Herr Hofmann, who had lived outside Germany for 25 years, is not subject to a criminal investigation. He will be replaced by Gerd Hausler, his deputy.

City comment, page 27

Elk test somersault delays launch of second new car

FROM DEBORAH COLLCUTT IN FRANKFURT

THE German car manufacturer Daimler Benz is to delay the launch of its new Smart model because of safety problems — only months after another model, the Mercedes A-Class, flipped over during trials.

The revolutionary two-seater Smart car, developed and built by Daimler in partnership with the Swiss watch manufacturers SMH — producers of Swatch — turned over during the same so-called "elk tests" as the A-Class, forcing engineers to return the car to the factory to widen the body. Nicolas Hayek, SMH chairman, said the Smart car had "failed under very extreme conditions".

The trial was carried out after the A-Class flipped over in October in tests by Scandinavian journalists simulating the sudden, high speed, braking turns needed to avoid ramming into wild elk.

Mercedes had already begun delivery of the A-Class when the "elk test" was completed, but it has now delayed the model until February to add new safety features, which include lower, wider tyres and an electronic stabilising device.

Although the revamped A-Class has subsequently passed an elk test, Mercedes has lost thousands of customers who cancelled their orders, which, along with the damage to its reputation, could cost the company tens of millions.

Smart: a wider body after failing 'elk test'

Heads are also likely to roll over the latest embarrassment.

"After the problems with the A-Class, the technicians put the Smart car through every imaginable test," said Mr Hayek. "We want a perfect car and that is why it was better now to delay the start of deliveries." The delay is expected to hurt earnings by about £111 million. Despite this and a 96 pence drop in the Daimler share value on the Frankfurt DAX yesterday afternoon, the company is standing by its 1997 profit forecast for further growth.

The delayed launches of Daimler's two latest ventures will be measured more in terms of bad publicity than actual profits and this recent incident raises serious questions as to why such safety problems were not unearthed earlier.

"We have a problem — all the groom's guests want to sit on the right"

Hindley fights on

Myra Hindley, the Moors murderer, is to fight on for her freedom after she failed in her attempt to overturn the Home Secretary's decision that she must die in prison. She will now go to the Court of Appeal ..... Page 7

Spinning trouble

The Government's message of "greater transparency" in Europe risks backfiring, thanks to the heavy-handed tactics of its media managers when dealing with continental journalists ..... Page 16

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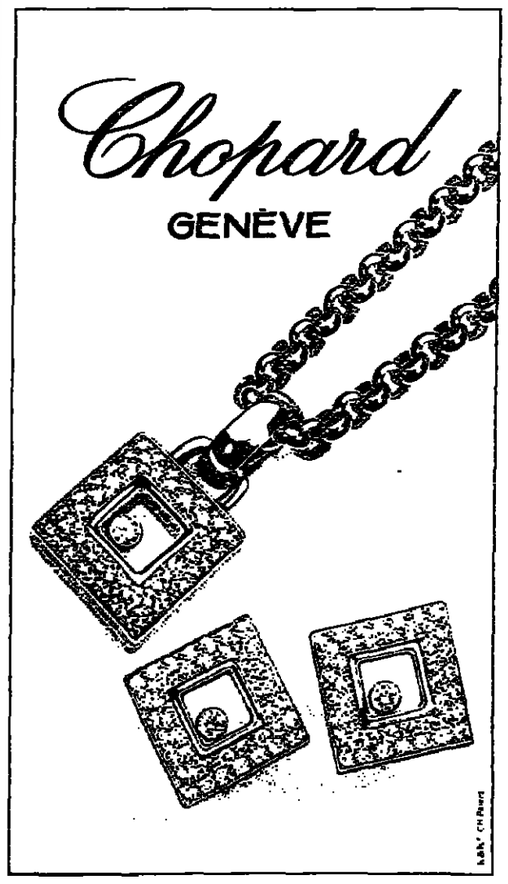

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Rapping knuckles, not gifts, this season of goodwill

MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

In this season of goodwill it is all but obligatory in the Commons Chamber to preface every question with the phrase "in this season of goodwill". The MP then goes on to insult whomever he or she is addressing.

But, if it fails to warm the politician's heart, the onset of Christmas does at least loosen the tongue. A frank aside at Questions to the President of the Board of Trade yesterday told us more about Margaret Beckett's attitude to Europe than seven months of bland, official press releases.

Her Tory Shadow, John Redwood, had complained that Mrs Beckett used to be anti-Europe, but now toed the pro-European line. Dennis Skinner barked: "Yer did the opposite. Yer still a Johnny-come-lately." Brushing aside her briefing, Mrs Beckett smiled: "I met a man at dinner recently who told me he'd been a Eurosceptic since 1992. I replied, 'Too late'!"

The United Kingdom's economy was now "bound up", she added, with Europe. We "must make the best we can" of it.

So now we know. The President of the Board of Trade thinks the European Union is a bad thing from which it is now too late to withdraw. A defensible point of view — but a slightly unexpected one from the person Mr Blair has put in charge of British trade, commerce and industry.

Dressed in an eye-catching white trouser-suit with white high-heels — which in this season of goodwill we might describe as equally suitable for a caravanning barbecue — Mrs Beckett was as cool as ever. Not so her bizarre sidekick, Ian McCartney, who has misread his title. Minister for Competitiveness as Minister for Combativeness. Mr McCartney responds to every question with a hail of unintelligible gruff, belligerent squeaking noises, like a chubby, macho Glaswegian mouse.

Known to colleagues as Big Mac, he is shorter than Mrs Beckett and about half the height of his lanky fellow-minister, John Battle. McCartney's head seems to sit straight on top of his ribcage with no intervening neck. The Opposition dubs him Teletubby but I have always found these creatures more thoughtful and articulate. In this season of goodwill we may call it unsurprising that he was deputed yesterday to answer questions on skills-shortages.

Answering on renewable energy, another minister — gaunt, bearded, distracted John Battle — burbled about "offshore wind projects", (presumably a reference to the Paymaster General) and "sites of special scientific interest" — presumably a reference to Mr McCartney.

Colin Pickthall (Lab, W Lancs), wondered whether "we should not, rather, be looking at Danish models" — an idea that excited a good deal of interest on the Tory benches. Pickthall stammered "perhaps that, too".

"In this season of goodwill," remarked Opposition spokeswoman Cheryl Gillan, in a festive pink vest, to young Nigel Griffiths, Consumer Affairs Minister and team-leader in Gordon Brown's Junior Squad, "the only wrapping this minister will be getting for Christmas will be across his knuckles."

As I left, the House Leader, Ann Taylor, walked in, sporting the most brutal haircut imaginable. Mrs Taylor, a high-powered apparatchik, brings an imaginative approach to her conciliatory role as Business Manager in Chief and has taken to heckling Opposition Spokesmen from her place on the Front Bench.

In this season of goodwill it is worth remarking that once you have imagined Taylor applying electrodes to your gonads you will never see her in quite the same way again.

Smith accused of U-turn on £1m for British Museum

By Dalya Alberge and Philip Webster

CHRIS SMITH was accused last night of a climbdown after promising the cash-strapped British Museum another £1 million on condition that it did not introduce admission charges next year.

In a carrot-and-stick offer, the Culture Secretary told the museum that the money was dependent upon it devising an action plan to cut costs dramatically, streamlining its cumbersome "bureaucracy" and generating more income to supplement its public subsidy.

His proposal was immediately attacked by Francis Maude, the Shadow Culture Secretary: "Last year Labour said they were in favour of admission charges, but would not fund them. Last month they claimed they had no influence over whether trustees choose to introduce admission charges.

"Now the Government says that it is to provide an extra £1 million to the British Museum on the condition that it does not introduce admission charges." He said Mr Smith was "blundering from one U-turn to the next".

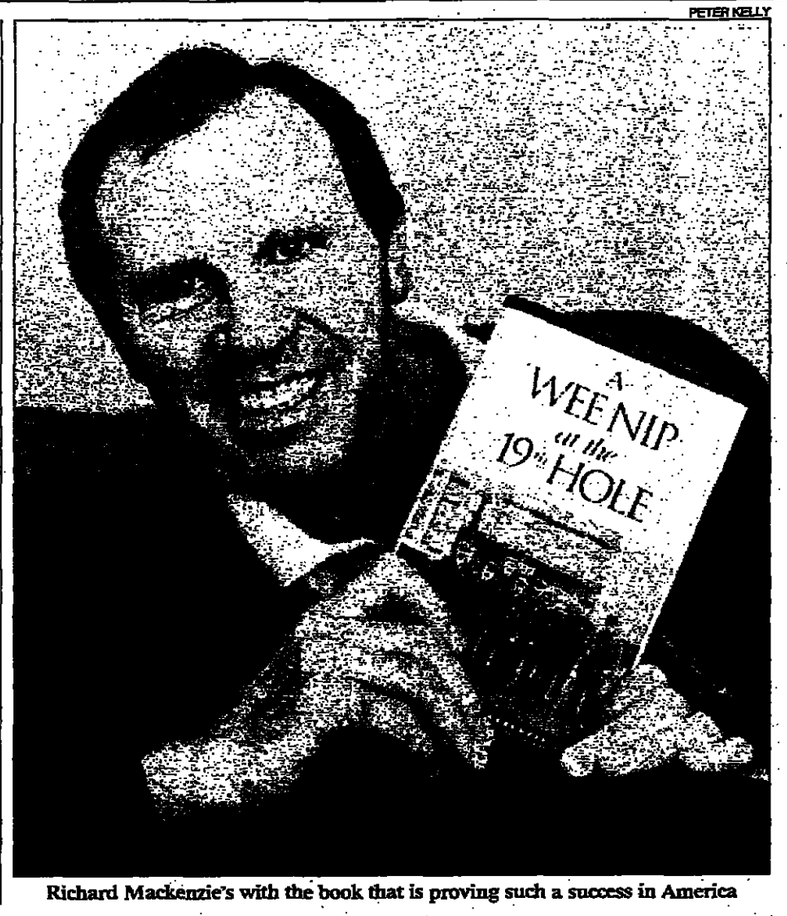
Sources close to Mr Smith said that he had made his surprise move to stop the museum taking "irrevocable" decisions on charging. In effect, Mr Smith was using delaying tactics, avoiding any rash decisions, at least until the publication of the Government's museums review next year.

Sir Hugh Leggatt, the former Museums and Galleries Commissioner, welcomed the proposal. Acknowledging that £1 million would not go far, he said: "It's a start. As soon as one has made a start, one can move forward. It would be awful if he had slammed the door in the BM's faces, but he hasn't." He felt that Mr Smith's "tough-talking" was just what museums needed.

The art world expressed anger that more money for the British Museum meant less for others. Three of the nation's most prominent institutions came in for particular punishment. The National Heritage Memorial Fund complained that they had suffered a drastic loss of £3 million while English Heritage was £2 million poorer. The British Film Institute said it had been badly hit by a £1 million decrease.

☐ The Arts Council is facing its "worst revenue crisis" of recent decades, the council's outgoing chairman, the Earl of Gowrie, warned last night. He told peers that while the Arts Council had enjoyed "a capital feast" from National Lottery funds, it had, at the same time, suffered "a revenue famine" as its grant-in-aid was cut.

PETER KELLY



Richard Mackenzie's with the book that is proving such a success in America

Caddy bags a literary success

By Philip Delves Broughton

THE reminiscences of a Scottish golf caddy have overtaken Oprah Winfrey's latest book in the American best-seller charts. Richard Mackenzie, caddy master at St Andrews, had never written a book before he decided to collect stories from the club's caddies past and present. *A Wee Nip at the 19th Hole* has sold 40,000 copies.

Mr Mackenzie, 50, has just returned from a two-week trip to America to publicise his work, which will released in Britain in the new year. He believes the success of a book that deals with characters such as Poot Chisholm and Tip Anderson, Arnold Palmer's caddy for many years, is because it goes back to the roots of golf. It also includes previously unpublished photographs.

Mr Mackenzie said: "It's about real characters and covers all aspects of the lives of caddies in St Andrews. But I never thought it would take off like this."

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Make someone happy this Christmas

Aitken finds comfort in evangelical church

By Philip Delves Broughton

JONATHAN AITKEN has used his first public utterance since the collapse of his libel action against *The Guardian* to reveal himself as an evangelical Christian.

In a man not previously known for his saintliness, the conversion is Damascene, even more startling than Michael Portillo's sudden need to be loved.

The former Conservative Cabinet minister attributes his salvation to Holy Trinity Brompton, the London church at the heart of the Church of England's powerful evangelical movement, which includes the topless model Samantha Fox in its congregation.

In the Christmas issue of *The Spectator* magazine, Mr Aitken, who was once a churchwarden at St Margaret's, in Westminster, writes of his sympathy with the more grisly moments of the Nativity story.

As a young boy in hospital in Dublin for a serious tubercular condition, he says: "I was captivated by the cheerful Christmas symbols of heavenly hosts, angels, shepherds, wise men and stars in the East.

"But I later discovered a deeper message from the moments of pain and anxiety in the early stages of the Nativity saga and, more importantly, from the way in which they were healed."

His recent plight was eased by the realisation that it was nothing when compared to the tough deal handed out to the newborn by Herod, or Joseph and Mary's night in the Bethlehem cowshed.

His language has lost nothing since he spoke of "the trusty sword of truth". He says the terms "spiritual hunger" and "greater spiritual awareness" were "sprinkled across the media like confetti", becoming "a cornucopia of clichés" at the time of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Evangelical Christianity, its prayer cells, fellowships and teaching courses have provided the victuals for his own spiritual hunger.

He has joined the half a million or so who have taken the Holy Trinity Brompton Alpha course in Christianity. "Evidently," he writes, "I am not the only prisoner of past mistakes to have found this course helpful."

Mr Aitken is not, however, unaware that some might find his new-found faith surprising: "Belonging as I do to the Church Reticent wing of Anglicanism, I am suspicious of foxhole conversions through 'easy believism', and cautious about accepting adversity as the gateway to a deeper faith."

His self-justification comes in the line from the Psalms about using one's vale of misery as a well, because the reward for the redeemed and penitent is love, joy and all sorts of other good things.

Mr Aitken's piece rises in a crescendo of alleluias to a final clarion call: "So long as faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ is one's companion in life's dark valleys, then even a painful Christmas can still be a joyful Christmas."

Mr Aitken yesterday declined to add anything more to what he had written.

Aitken: took a course at Holy Trinity Brompton

Major riled by Hague's apology for ERM entry

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

JOHN MAJOR delivered a sideswipe at William Hague yesterday over the Tory leader's apology for Britain's entry to the European exchange-rate mechanism when Mr Major was Chancellor in 1990.

He also openly disagreed with Mr Hague's decision to rule out the single currency for ten years.

Mr Hague was hailed by the Tory Right after saying sorry over the ERM at the Tory conference in October. But Mr Major, who has tried to refrain from any criticism of his successor, allowed his irritation to show in an interview with *The Spectator*.

After hitting out at the "wilder extravagances" of some Tories over Europe the former Prime Minister said he was glad he had never said sorry about the ERM. Politicians apologising was silly.

He mocked Tony Blair for making apologies, asking whether Uriah Heep was running the country. "Look at Blair, apologising to the Irish — next time he will probably apologise to the Italians," he said.

Asked if he thought Mr Hague was sensible to rule out a single currency for ten years, he replied: "I would not have ruled it out for ten years: for the foreseeable future, perhaps, but not necessarily ten years."

Mr Major said he believed that the country, while lukewarm about Europe, was not fanatically anti. "Some of the wilder extravagances of members of my party were for the birds. There were some people who made the whole Tory party seem mad."

He also uttered his fiercest attack since the election on the Government. "Labour lied to the middle classes. They made them all these promises of help and now, every day, they kick them in the pants. Gordon Brown's wholly unnecessary Budget was a disgraceful raid on pension funds. A higher rate of council tax and the abolition of Tessas is stupid and incredibly vindictive . . .

"I have calculated that Labour is costing each middle-class family £700 a month. I suppose they think they are being macho. I suppose that is why they refuse to bow to parliamentary opinion."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Driving licences to carry photos

Photographs will be included on driving licences from next summer, the Government announced last night. The scheme, ordered by the European Union, will be phased in and will not affect licence holders immediately.

New drivers will be issued with the photocards on passing their test but motorists driving now will change only when they need to update details. It will not be compulsory to carry them and the Department of Transport says they will not become identity cards.

United's gift

Manchester United yesterday gave £100,000 to help a school that provided two of its youth players to become a specialist sports college. Kirk Hilton, 16, and Daniel Higginbotham, 18, were educated at Ashton on Mersey School. Trafford, one of 33 new specialist colleges announced yesterday by the Government.

Vets attack ban

Veterinary surgeons described the Government's decision to ban beef on the bone as a "panic overreaction" to a risk so small as to be almost non-existent. The British Veterinary Association said the Tory policy of complacency was in danger of being replaced by one of ill-considered, knee-jerk responses by Labour.

Rail fares up

Passengers on Connex South Central between London and East and West Croydon stations face a 10 per cent rise in fares. Those on Connex South Eastern will go up by an average of 5.3 per cent, while fares on Connex South Central's south London and Sussex Coast routes will rise by an average of 4.5 per cent.

Training deal

Richard Branson's Virgin Trains group yesterday announced a partnership between the private sector and a trade union to avert a huge potential shortage of drivers. An agreement between Virgin Trains and Aslef, the train drivers' union, will set up the first purpose-built training centre since privatisation of the railways.

Carling wins

Will Carling, the former England rugby union captain, was awarded undisclosed damages and costs against the *Daily Mail* yesterday, which had falsely accused him of being a stalker and a "telephone pest". A statement read out in Nottingham Crown Court said the newspaper wished to apologise to Mr Carling.

Censor chief

Andreas Whittam Smith, founding editor of *The Independent*, was yesterday appointed chairman of the British Board of Film Classification. He committed himself to a reform of the beleaguered institution, which has been widely criticised for its lax attitude to violence and sex and its secrecy over rulings.

Thomas bailed

Mickey Thomas, the former Manchester United and Welsh international soccer player, was charged yesterday with having unlawful sex with an underage girl. Thomas, 43, of Mochdre, near Colwyn Bay, north Wales, was arrested on Monday and bailed to appear before magistrates in Abergele on January 22.

CORRECTIONS

☐ A report (June 20) of an inquiry into the case of Peter Winship, a paranoid schizophrenic found guilty of the manslaughter of his father, should not have suggested physical abuse by him. No such abuse was ever established, and Mr Winship often confused his father with another adult figure in his life.

☐ The Government's ban on the sale of beef on the bone (report, December 4) will not affect Bovril.

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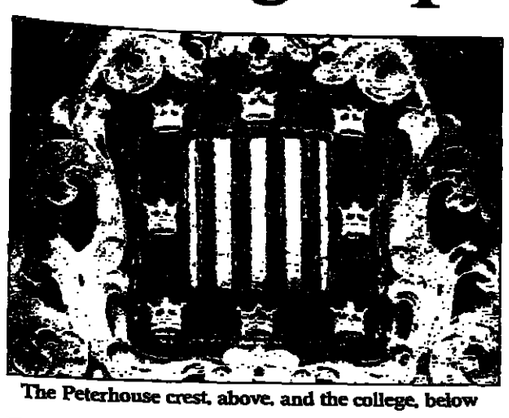
College spooked by ghost of bursar past



The Peterhouse crest, above, and the college, below

FINDLAY KEMBER

Matthew Speller, a college butler, outside the Combination Room, where he says he and a colleague saw the ghost and felt a sudden chill

Peterhouse considers exorcism of restless suicide victim who stalks the fellows' dining room, report **Adrian Lee** and **John O'Leary**

CAMBRIDGE University's oldest college has turned to the Church for help in ridding itself of the restless spirit of a former bursar who took his life more than two centuries ago.

The tortured soul of Francis Dawes, who hanged himself from a bellrope at Peterhouse in 1789, is believed to be responsible for several ghostly sightings this year in the college's oak-panelled Combination Room.

Two butlers, Matthew Speller and Paul Davies, said they watched the ghost move slowly across the room before disappearing near the staircase where Dawes's body is thought to have been discovered. In the most recent incident, Andrew Murison, the current senior bursar, heard a repetitive knocking late at night and was enveloped by an eerie chill, although a large fire in the room was still glowing.

The Rev Dr Graham Ward, a theologian and Dean of Peterhouse, has reported the haunting to the diocese of Ely and a requiem Mass may now be held to exorcise the spirit if it continues to disrupt college life. "It would be difficult because all the fellows and domestic staff would have to attend and, inevitably, some would not want to, but it might come to that," he said.

"Ghosts don't fit into any theology of the resurrection I know about, but I saw the absolute terror on the faces of those two [butlers], so I don't doubt that something happened. In a college full of unreliable people, they are completely reliable."

Dr Murison said: "There is no reason to disbelieve the butlers. They are very level-headed, although some of the fellows no doubt think they have been at the Master's port. As far as I am concerned, I did feel a sense of foreboding, but the ghost has not done any harm. I think it is unlikely we would get all 45 fellows together for an exorcism — they are a cynical lot."

Dr Murison had stopped off in the Combination Room, where the fellows of the college hold meetings and eat lunch, when he felt the presence of his predecessor. "It was about 11.45 and, because I had missed supper, I went to get some fruit to take back to my room. I was about to pick up a banana when there was a knocking.

"I thought it must be the central heating coming on, but the sound came from beneath the window where there are no pipes or radiator. I had already noticed how cold it was, which I thought was strange because the embers in the fire were still red."

Dawes, who is buried in the neighbouring churchyard of Little St Mary's, committed suicide after blaming himself for the controversial election of Francis Barnes as Master of Peterhouse. The election, overseen by the bursar, was marked by skullduggery and resulted in a highly unpopular victor. Historical documents note that hundreds of people attended the funeral of Dawes, a respected classicist, who was in his 60s when he died and bequeathed £100 to his beloved college.

The story of the Peterhouse haunting is told in today's edition of *The Times Higher Education Supplement*. So far, there is no sign of any malevolent intention by the ghost, which has become the talk of the college.

The butlers were adamant yesterday that there had been a visitation. The first sighting, in April, happened while both were serving dinner.

Mr Speller, 22, said: "We went into the Combination Room to get some plates before taking them up the spiral staircase. We were chatting away when we both saw something move slowly across the room, about 15ft from the middle to the window. I just looked at Paul and said, 'Did you see that?'."

Both men described the ghost as human-sized, but said it was impossible to distinguish features or determine its sex as it travelled about 1ft off the ground. In the dimly lit room, it stood out brightly and, like the bursar, the butlers both said they felt a sudden chill. Mr Davies said: "I was not frightened but, at the same time, I did not want to get too close."

On another occasion they felt sufficiently alarmed to interrupt a dinner to inform the Dean. Mr Davies, 26, attempted to walk towards the apparition, but it did not waver, taking the same path to the window.

The stone staircase winds 40 steps and two floors to the belfry where the unfortunate bursar ended his life. The butlers have also heard rhythmical knocking which appeared to move around the panelling and, on another occasion, Paul Cooke, the senior butler, noticed a solid wooden door shaking violently. His strenuous efforts to hold it shut made no difference and, when the vibrations stopped and he was able to open it, there was no one on the other side.

Peterhouse is the ideal setting for a ghost story. Founded in 1284, it still occupies some of the original buildings. Dinners and meetings of the governing body are conducted by candlelight.

Two previous exorcisms have been carried out in the college. In the 18th century, a poltergeist was removed from a student's room and, more recently, a former Dean carried out a ceremony because of the appearance of a dark presence in a corner of the old courtyard overlooking a graveyard.

Tests for cancer on Duchess of York negative

By Joanna Bale

THE Duchess of York was given a clean bill of health yesterday after tests, including cancer checks, on a lump under her arm.

A spokeswoman from her office said: "She is very relieved. This was a cautionary sign that she needs to slow down and rest because she is very tired."

A senior consultant at the Lister Hospital in central London is believed to have conducted a biopsy on the lump, which involves taking a sample of tissue to check whether it is a benign or malignant growth.

The Duchess, 38, was said to have discovered the lump and called her GP to her Berkshire home on Sunday. The GP referred the Duchess, who complained of feeling rundown, to the Lister, a renowned cancer hospital, which she attended for an hour on Tuesday night.

She has recently completed a busy schedule of charity events, including a Christmas concert for Children in Crisis at the London Docklands Arena and a visit to Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. She has had an estimated 80 engagements in the past year and has travelled to America and back three times in the past month.

On Monday, despite her health concerns, the Duchess felt she could not pull out of a full day's filming and a photocall for a WeightWatchers advertising campaign. Her friends have expressed fears that the pressures over her personal finances and her role in the Royal Family may have contributed to her condition.

Last night the Duchess was said to be celebrating the news of her health check while on holiday at the Tuscan villa of her friend Count Gallo della Gherardesca, an Italian millionaire who is separated from his wife.

Dr Lesley Walker, of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "Nine out of ten lumps are benign. But if they are malignant then it is important to get treatment as soon as possible."

Man acquitted of murder scared PC who bugged him

By Tim Jones

AN ODD-JOB man cleared of murdering Vikki Thompson, who was bludgeoned to death as she walked her dog, subjected the family of a policeman who investigated him to a series of death-threat telephone calls, a court was told yesterday.

Mark Weston, 22, learnt during his trial last December that the home he shared with his parents had been bugged by police while he was under suspicion. The family's conversations were relayed to the house of Weston's neighbour, PC Robert Salmon, the village constable of Ascott-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire.

Mark Weston, who still felt persecuted by the police despite being cleared of murdering Vikki Thompson

Weston spent ten months in custody before being acquitted by a jury. Paul Harrison, for the prosecution, told Witney Magistrates' Court yesterday that after Weston was released he had made more than 50 calls to PC Salmon, his wife Sheila, and their daughters Caroline, 22, and Natalie, 19, between June and September this year.

Most of the calls, Mr Harrison said, were silent, but some were much more sinister. He had whispered: "Die, die," and "Soon you die". Mr Harrison said Mrs Salmon was so distressed she was given antidepressant pills by her doctor.

Weston, who pleaded guilty to four charges of harassment, was caught after police mounted a surveillance operation using video equipment outside one of the telephone kiosks in the village.

After being arrest, Weston told police: "There he was, sitting in his house listening to everything being said so I decided to harass him by listening to his house."

Chris Edwards, for the defence, said everything had stemmed from the dreadful murder of Mrs Thompson, which had still not been resolved. He said the charge against Weston had been dismissed in minutes because after a three-week trial the jury had decided the case against him was very weak.

Mr Edwards said: "The aftermath of the case has made victims of many people and one of them is Weston himself. He is blighted as far as job applications are concerned. Everywhere he goes people are staring at him and the media interest will not go away."

He added: "My client says every time he goes into his garden so does PC Salmon. He feels very much under scrutiny, which he should not be because of his acquittal."

Weston, he said, believed he was being harassed by PC Salmon and had complained to police authorities about his behaviour. Mr Edwards added: "He was immature and wrong to try to get his own back by making calls to the Salmon household. But he denies the number of calls and says he did not make any threats of any kind."

Weston, he said, had decided of his own volition to stop making the calls before his arrest, after deciding they were getting him nowhere.

Weston, who is unemployed, was sentenced to a restraining order preventing him from having any contact with the Salmon family other than necessary contact with PC Salmon in his duty as a public officer.

After the hearing Weston said: "I'm glad he [PC Salmon] felt scared stiff the same way I did when I was arrested for a murder I didn't commit."

Who put the wind up Branson?

Andrew Pierce on a flight of fancy that has tickled the Virgin chief

RICHARD BRANSON'S long-standing rival, British Airways, may inadvertently have played a part in the premature departure of the *Virgin Global Challenger* balloon.

Technicians working on the multi-million-pound project have been at a loss to explain the freak gust of wind which propelled the world's biggest balloon 60,000 ft into the skies while the pilots were still on the ground.

As work begun yesterday on a replacement envelope, it emerged that a BA 737 had landed at Marrakesh airport at almost the precise moment the 223 ft balloon broke free from its moorings on an adjoining field.

Turbulence from aircraft can disturb even larger planes flying into the wake. Weather charts have confirmed that the winds gusted at a maximum speed of up to four knots as predicted throughout the day. But when disaster struck, with the BA jet in the vicinity, they soared to 14.

The half-full flight, number BA 6912, left from Gatwick Airport on schedule and landed at Marrakesh Airport 15 minutes early, at 11 am.

The balloon left on its unmanned flight at 11.02 am.

Michael Pegg, a holidaymaker from Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, who was on board, said: "When we were coming down I could see the balloon was inflated. We all looked out of the windows to try to get a better view. We then lost sight of it. Three or four minutes later, when we made it on to the runway, it had broken free. When we stood on the steps to the ground it was well up into the sky and disappearing fast."

Mr Branson, who began a holiday yesterday before returning to try to relaunch his mission in a new balloon, reacted with good humour to the idea that BA, his old adversary in the so called "dirty tricks" war, could have been a factor. He said: "I always thought that BA would sponsor me to stay up in a balloon for months and months on end. The last thing they would have wanted to do was ground me."

However, BA did not see the suggestion in the same humorous light. "I cannot believe our plane was anything to do with it," said a spokesman.

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Portrait of the artist as a very sick man

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

REMBRANDT had a high cholesterol level and was probably suffering from a headache when he painted his famous self-portrait in 1659.

The artist, who was then 53, was showing signs of premature ageing, a condition he may well have inherited from his mother, according to a diagnosis made from a study of the picture by Carlos Espinel, a professor of cardiology and an amateur art historian.

He comes to the conclusion that when Rembrandt painted the picture, he was not only emotionally traumatised by financial and personal losses, but he was becoming affected by ageing and disease.

The accuracy of the way the skin is painted, with the grey swathe of the temporal blood vessel and the wrinkled brow, indicate that he was in pain. The likely explanation is a headache caused by temporal arteritis, an inflammation of the artery wall across the side of his forehead. This affects the scalp over the temples and causes pain and tenderness.

The eyes, too, are showing signs of his ageing process. The thick forehead wrinkles suggest he has chronic contraction of the surrounding muscles, which would give him brow ptosis. This can be caused by a neurological disease, such as a brain tumour or a cerebral aneurysm. The left eye is surrounded with cream-coloured lines that are a sign of xanthelasmata, a tell-tale indication of a high cholesterol count. The white of the eye is also showing the coloured spots of pinguicula, a sign of ageing which is found today only in people who are at least 80.

From the redness of the cheeks and nose, he was suffering from rosacea, an inflammatory skin disease, as well as rhinophyma, a condition of elderly men where the nose becomes bulbous. Rosacea is most common in middle-aged, fair-skinned patients, causing redness and an effect like broken veins. It can be caused by overlong exposure to sunlight or by drinking.

Alcohol worsens rosacea, but at the time of the painting Rembrandt was supposedly living a simple ascetic life, having lost his wife, three of his five children, his wealth, his art collection and his grand house in Amsterdam. He had been declared insolvent three years earlier and his painting of *Moses and the Tablets* had just been rejected.

In the circumstances, Professor Espinel writes in the *Lancet*, he may well have been suffering from clinical depression. In a rented, dilapidated house he sat down to paint his own portrait.

"Stroke by stroke, wrinkle by wrinkle he managed to portray himself. He rendered his skin so that it spoke for him. And the skin in its frank, articulate and unforgiving language told of its struggle with time."

The artist survived for ten more years.

A medical evaluation of Rembrandt. His self-portrait: ageing, disease, and the language of the skin

Rembrandt's self-portrait tells a story of "disease, depression and premature ageing"

Press code will protect public from intrusion

By Carol Midgley, Media Correspondent

A REVISED code of practice designed to give the public greater protection from intrusion by newspapers and magazines was described yesterday as "the toughest in Europe" by Lord Wakeham, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission.

The revised regulations, influenced by the circumstances surrounding the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in effect forbids harassment of the type practised by some paparazzi photographers. It specifically prohibits persistent pursuit by journalists and re-emphasises the responsibility of editors to ensure that material provided from outside sources is obtained in accordance with the provisions of the code.

The text begins: "All members of the press have a duty to maintain the highest professional and ethical standards. This code sets the benchmarks for those standards. It both protects the rights of the individual and upholds the public's right to know."

Changes relate to privacy, harassment, intrusion into grief, the treatment of children and the public interest. Children at school, it says, have the right to be free from unnecessary intrusion. It bans payments to minors and provides protection for the children of the famous.

The code, which comes into effect on January 1, acknowledges that everyone is entitled to respect with regards to their private and family life, home, health and correspondence. It provides a new definition of a private place as "public or private property where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy".

In a section on grief, the code calls for sensitivity in publication in addition to the existing provisions relating to approaches by journalists.

Exceptions for cases involving public interest have been reworded. The code says the public interest includes detecting or exposing crime or a serious misdemeanour, protecting public health and safety and preventing the public from being misled.

In cases involving children, editors must demonstrate an exceptional public interest to override the normally paramount interests of the child.

Lord Wakeham welcomed the revised code. "I am pleased that the industry has responded so positively to the recommendations which I put forward in September," he said.

"As I said at that time, the new code will be the toughest set of industry regulations anywhere in Europe.

"I shall be continuing my efforts to seek equivalent provisions in other European countries to deal with the issue of harassment and also my discussions with the regulatory authorities for the broadcast media on the issue of the media scrum."

Sir David English, chairman of the industry's code committee, said: "I believe that the important changes which we have made in the code show that press self-regulation can and does respond speedily to public concern. I am confident that editors and journalists throughout the UK will demonstrate their responsibility in observing the new provisions."

Media, pages 40-42

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Bell pleads for soldiers who shot suspect

By James Landale, Political Reporter

MARTIN BELL yesterday launched a fresh campaign to free two Scots Guardsmen jailed for the murder of a Catholic teenager in Belfast.

The former BBC journalist and independent MP for Tatton called for the early release of James Fisher and Mark Wright, who are serving life imprisonment for the shooting in 1992 of 18-year-old Peter McBride.

Mr Bell said the two guardsmen, who were sentenced in 1995 after three years in custody, had been in prison long enough to pay for their crime.

Fisher, 28, from Ayr, and Wright, 24, from Arbroath, shot Mr McBride while on patrol in the republican New Lodge area of north Belfast. They believed he was carrying a "coffee-jar bomb" containing shrapnel and Semtex when he ran away after an argument with their patrol commander.

Mr McBride ignored shouted warnings from the guardsmen, continued to run and was shot in the back. He was found to be unarmed and to have had no paramilitary connections. Mr McBride was the father of two children with his 18-year-old girlfriend, Pauline Devine.

The men are currently being held in Maghaberry Prison, near Lisburn, and their cases will be reviewed again next October. Mr Bell, who is seeking a meeting with Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said there was a difference between the "dreadful accident" that took place during a tense confrontation and premeditated cold-blooded murder.

Bell: guardsmen had served long enough

He compared the guardsmen's situation with that of Private Lee Clegg, who was released after serving four years of a life sentence for the murder of a Belfast joyrider.

Mr Bell has written to Jean McBride, the mother of Peter McBride, who said she was hurt and bewildered by the MP's involvement. "Those soldiers had to run two streets to catch up with him, and then kneel down to shoot." She said she wanted them to serve at least ten years.

Leading article, page 21

Guildford bomb man freed early

By Martin Fletcher, Chief Ireland Correspondent

A LEADING IRA terrorist who says he planted the Guildford pub bomb in 1974 will be released early from an Irish prison this morning, having never been charged with that offence.

Brendan Dowd is one of nine IRA convicts being freed early by the Irish Government to boost republican confidence in the peace process. But the releases have so angered the loyalist Progressive Unionist Party that it threatened last night to pull out of the Stormont peace talks.

Dowd was given life sentences for three offences in 1976. He later told police that he and his "active service unit" had planted the bomb in the Horse and Groom pub in Guildford, killing five people and injuring 54.

Dowd, 48, has served 21 years for conspiracy to murder, conspiracy to cause explosions and the attempted murder of policemen. He was due to be freed by the summer of 2001.

The releases will mean that Ireland has let 16 IRA men out early since the ceasefire was restored in July.

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With effect from the 1st January 1998, the Renault Laguna Prize Draw promotion will cease. The December Winners will be notified in January, 1998.

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The serial killers stalking Soapland

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

DEATH has become so commonplace in British television soap operas that they are creating a war-zone environment which distorts the nation's concept of violence, according to research by a senior fellow at a leading teaching hospital.

The study, published today in the *British Medical Journal*, shows that the chances of soap characters surviving to old age are much less than those of a bomb disposal expert, Formula One driver or steeplejack. Disease is rampant, but violent death, including murder, suicide, overdose and crashes are 20 times more common than in reality.

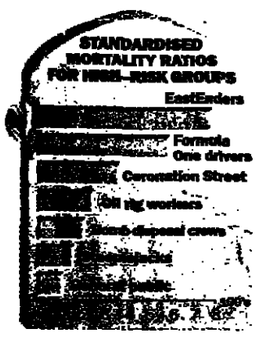
"Characters in these serials would be advised to wear good protective clothing designed to withstand sharp implements, sudden impacts and fire and to receive regular counselling for the psychological impact of living in an environment akin to a war zone," says Tim Crayford, 33, of the public health and epidemiology department at King's College Hospital, South London.

He studied the 85 deaths that occurred in Coronation Street, Brookside, Emmerdale and Albert Square in the 12 years since *EastEnders* first appeared in 1985. He found that characters tended to die young from a variety of obscure and often violent causes, including a plane crash in *Emmerdale* which killed four.

Of the total, 54 met a violent end and the others died of diseases including breast cancer, Aids and an undiagnosed virus that killed three in *Brookside*. People in the real world with cancer and other serious diseases have a better chance of surviving for five years than a soap character.

Death rates varied between the programmes. Fourteen died in *Coronation Street*, 17 in *EastEnders*, 26 in *Brookside* and 28 in *Emmerdale*. "Brookside Close and Emmerdale could be the most dangerous streets in the United Kingdom," Dr Crayford says.

He accepts that producers will exaggerate the dangers of real life, but says that the programmes are meant to mirror reality. "It seems sad that for soap operas to hold our interest they have to be about as dangerous as Formula One racing ... Could the exaggerated portrayal of these violent and dangerous lives be contributing to our distorted national perceptions about violent crime and death?"



Characters are dying to attract your attention

Ratings war has seen a big rise in the number of casualties, writes **Carol Midgley**

SINCE Martha Longhurst expired from a heart attack in the snug of Coronation Street's Rover's Return in 1964, British soaps have suffered more than their fair share of untimely deaths. But the tendency to bump off characters has grown alarmingly in recent years.

In the past 12 months, *Coronation Street* has seen off four characters: the dithering Derek Wilton (stress-induced heart attack), the taxi driver Don Brennan (car fire), the cleaner Joyce Smedley (hit by a car) and Betty Turpin's new husband, Billy Williams (natural causes). Its most spectacular death was that of Alan Bradley, the Machiavellian businessman hit by a Blackpool tram as he chased Rita Sullivan down the promenade. Ken Barlow has lost two wives (to a drug overdose and electrocution), both his parents, brother, nephew and Uncle Albert Tatlock.

Brookside is notorious for the most far-fetched deaths. Trevor Jordache was buried under the patio after his abused wife stabbed him with a kitchen knife. Sue Sullivan and her young son, Danny, fell from scaffolding and Damon Grant was stabbed on a day trip to York. Most recently, Matthew and Emily Farnham were killed in a car crash and Gladys, mother of Elaine Johnson, was smothered with a pillow.

John Bowman, editor of *Inside Soap* magazine, said: "British soaps do seem to be much gloomier than Australian ones. That is what makes them better: they are grittier and darker. A good death can put two million on the viewing figures. When a character dies, it usually means their contract has ended or they have upset the producer.

"This year has been one of carnage for *Coronation Street*. Billy Williams died off-screen, which is the biggest indignity. The actor doesn't even get to do the big death scene."

Emmerdale has raised its death quota considerably since the early 1980s, when, as *Emmerdale Farm*, it was regarded as the television equivalent of *The Archers*. Four years ago, four characters died in a Lockerbie-style air crash and this year Ron Hudson died from Huntingdon's disease, Frank Tate from a heart attack, Kate Sugden of a brain haemorrhage and Linda Fowler in a car crash.

EastEnders has seen the gangland murder of "Dirty" Den Watts, the brain haemorrhage of Arthur Fowler and the stabbing of the pub manager Eddie Royal. Pete Beale died off-screen in a car crash and Mark Fowler's wife Jill died from Aids-related cancer.

An *EastEnders* spokeswoman said only 1 per cent of characters had been killed. There had been 15 on-screen deaths and two reported. "*EastEnders* is a drama and, like any drama, explores the age-old complexities of life and death," she said. "The *EastEnders* data for this article was taken off unofficial Web sites and the findings should be taken with a pinch of salt. It is probably more dangerous to be a Shakespeare character."

A *Coronation Street* spokeswoman said: "This is not real life. It is a drama."

John Peake, a soap writer, said British soaps could not be compared to American ones, many of which had ludicrous storylines. "The US soaps are outrageous. People find underwater cities outside their towns and characters become possessed by the devil."

He said that, although the Australian soaps had generally less tragedy, they had a high quota of deaths because the turnover of actors was so quick. In *Neighbours* recently, Cheryl Stark was hit by a car and died in Ramsay Street. "The scene was heavily cut in Britain because it was considered too distressing," Mr Peake said.

The *Neighbours* character Helen Daniels will die in a scene to be shown in Britain next year. "She dies watching a video of Scott and Charlene's wedding. It was probably from boredom," Mr Peake said.

A lot of what you fancy does you good

By Ian Murray

MIDDLE AGED men with active sex lives have a far better chance of reaching a ripe old age, according to research published today. The more often they make love the longer they can expect to live, says a report in the *British Medical Journal*.

The authors say the findings are convincing enough for a health fitness campaign to be based on them. "Most of the health messages are about telling us to stop doing things and they tend to have disappointing results," said George Davey Smith, professor of clinical epidemiology at Bristol University.

"Making love may be the only form of exercise for some people and telling them to do more of something they enjoy could be beneficial."

The report says that health messages could be based on the "at *least* five a day" campaign to increase fruit and vegetable consumption — "although the numerical imperative might have to be adjusted".

The study was based on a group of 918 men aged between 45 and 59 living in Caerphilly, South Wales, and five nearby villages, between 1979 and 1983. They were volunteers for a study carried out to investigate health and social patterns in their age group.

When recruited they were all asked how often they had sexual intercourse and were classified into categories ranging from "never" to "daily".

After ten years it was found that a total of 150 had died: 67 from coronary heart disease and 83 from other causes.

Comparing the deaths with the medical records, the researchers found that the mortality risk in the group with the high frequency of intercourse was less than half that in other group.

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Former MI6 spy jailed for bid to sell his story

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

A FORMER MI6 officer was jailed for 12 months yesterday for trying to sell his story to an Australian publisher. Government lawyers fear that he will try again once he is released.

Richard Tomlinson, who served with MI6 for four years and operated in Moscow and Bosnia, will remain a category A prisoner for the four months that he is likely to serve. He has been in prison on remand for six weeks.

The case is causing acute anxiety for MI6 and the Government because of what he knows about highly secret operations. He is also bitterly angry at MI6 for sacking him.

At the Old Bailey, Sir Lawrence Verney, QC, the Recorder of London, said he was jailing him as a deterrent to others in his position, but added: "We're sadly aware it may not deter you."

Legal sources said that if he chose to fly to Australia after being released, nothing could be done to stop him writing another book and selling it to a foreign publisher, although he would face arrest if he returned to Britain. Tomlinson, who was born in New Zealand and has dual nationality, has relatives in Australia.

His counsel, Owen Davies, hinted at the possible problems ahead when, in appealing for a lenient sentence, he said that Tomlinson "ought to be put at liberty in such a frame of mind as to encourage his future silence about delicate operations that he knows about".

Tomlinson, 34, who gained a first-class degree in aeronautical engineering at Cambridge, had set out to write about his covert MI6 operations out of grievance at being sacked in 1995 after 3½ years' probationary service. MI6 considered he had the wrong attitude for long-term employment as an intelligence officer.

By the time the Metropolitan Police Special Branch caught up with him, he had the completed book on his computer and certain chapters on two Psion organisers. The court was told yesterday that one of those had been stolen from his Milton Keynes home.

When Tomlinson offered a synopsis to Transworld Publishers in Sydney, he claimed there was nothing in it that would damage Britain's national security. Nigel Sweeney, for the prosecution, said. However, Tomlinson later acknowledged that the synopsis contained secret information. He admitted a charge under the Official Secrets Act of unlawfully passing information to a third party.

For 50 minutes yesterday, court No 7 at the Old Bailey was closed to the public as the judge heard which parts of the book would damage national security.

The court was also told how Tomlinson, following the example of Peter Wright, the former MI5 officer who had *Spycatcher* published in Australia, put his proposals for a book to Judith McGee, a commissioning editor at Transworld, during a meeting in a cafe near Bondi beach. Miss McGee sought confirmation of his identity and assurances about the kind of story he was offering. In the end, the synopsis and a copy were placed in a locked cupboard at Transworld and the book was never published.

In February, MI6 came to an agreement with Tomlinson under which he would scrap his plans, hand over his material and drop his complaints against the service in return for "generous" financial help. But he broke the agreement and continued to write to the publishers in Sydney.

Passing sentence, the judge told Tomlinson that he was concerned only with "national interests and security of the intelligence services who require, and rightly so, absolute confidentiality about parts of their activities".

An artist's impression of Tomlinson in the dock. The media are banned from publishing images of his face

Bidding war for tycoon's soldiers

By John Shaw

RICH collectors waged a record-breaking battle for toy soldiers from the largest private army in the world at Christie's in South Kensington, southwest London, yesterday. Prices left the pre-sale estimates far behind in repeated bidding skirmishes for items collected by the late Malcolm Forbes, the American multimillionaire publisher of *Forbes* magazines.

He kept the army of 60,000 in a museum at the Palace Mendoub in Tangier, bought when he was considering an Arab edition of the magazine. The collection was sold in two stages and made an overall total of £519,368 with all the 1,054 lots finding buyers. Some collectors paid between two and 18 times the estimate for items from the 17th to 20th centuries.

☐ A rare lettercard posted from the Titanic two days before she sank on April 12, 1912, was sold for £4,830 at Sotheby's in London yesterday. The souvenir passed to stamp collector Stan Martin on the death of his mother-in-law in Clacton, Essex. He plans to donate the proceeds to the roof repair fund at his methodist church in Clacton.

Detonator blast kills weapons collector

By Jo Merrett

THE head of war studies at Sandhurst was killed when a detonator from his collection of military artefacts exploded in his hand.

Dr John Pimlott, 49, died on October 24, just 24 hours after returning from a battlefield visit to Alamein in Egypt. He managed to stagger into his lounge after the device, from a German shell, blew up while he was examining it, then died a few minutes later.

Earlier in October, before his visit to North Africa with colleagues from the Royal Military Academy, he had been to the Somme battlefield.

The father of two was found by his wife, Maggie, lying dead at their home in Camberley, Surrey, when she got up that morning. Mrs Pimlott said in a statement read to an inquest at Woking, Surrey, that she had gone to bed at 9.45pm the night before with a heavy cold and had gone straight to sleep.

Gary Sheffield, a colleague of Dr Pimlott, told the inquest that a firearms expert had said that the device that killed him was probably a small detonator from one of the world wars. A verdict of accidental death was recorded.

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هكذا من الإصل

Straw entitled to keep Hindley in jail for life

Moors murderer vows to take fight for freedom to a higher court, reports **Richard Ford**

MYRA HINDLEY, the Moors murderer, vowed last night to fight on for her freedom after she failed in her attempt to overturn the Home Secretary's decision that she must die in prison.

As Hindley prepared to take her fight to the Court of Appeal, the House of Lords and eventually the European Courts, an inquiry was under way into how the *Daily Mail* was able to publish the result of the court challenge before it was delivered. Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, suggested that legal advisers for either the Home Secretary or Hindley were responsible for the leak.

He told David Pannick, QC, for the Government, and Edward Fitzgerald, QC, for Hindley, to carry out an investigation. Lord Bingham said it was "utterly unacceptable" that parties involved in a case should learn of the decision through the media.

In his 35-page judgment Lord Bingham ruled that the Home Secretary had the power to decide that a life sentence imposed on an offender "will mean life". There remains a chance that Hindley, 55, could be released because Jack Straw has said the whole-life tariff could be reduced in the event of "exceptional progress" while an offender was in jail.

After the ruling Mr Pannick said that if Hindley wished to apply for a fresh review of her case on the ground that she had made exceptional progress in prison, it would be considered by Mr Straw.

Hindley has served 31 years for murdering Lesley Ann Downey, 10, and Edward Evans, 17. In 1987 she admitted involvement in the murders of John Kilbride, 12, Keith Bennett, 12, and Pauline Reade, 16.

The Lord Chief Justice, sitting with Mr Justice Hooper and Mr Justice Astill, rejected claims by lawyers acting for Hindley that a provisional minimum sentence of 30 years was unlawfully increased to a whole-life tariff. But he expressed unease at the fact that decisions on how long convicted murderers should remain in prison were taken by politicians rather than the judiciary.

He said: "I part from the case uneasily conscious that the issues that may really underlie the case are not before us. There is room for serious debate whether the task of determining how long convicted murderers should serve in prison for punishment for the crimes should be undertaken by the judiciary (as in the case of discretionary life prisoners), or, as now, by the executive."

Lord Bingham added: "The applicant clearly feels that she is held hostage to public opinion, condemned to pass the rest of her life in prison, although no longer judged a danger to anyone, because of her notoriety and the public obloquy that would fall on any Home Secretary who ordered her release."

Hindley had challenged a decision by Michael Howard made earlier this year and reaffirmed by Mr Straw last month that a whole-life tariff was necessary to meet the needs of "retribution and deterrence".

The Lord Chief Justice said that the policy announced by Mr Howard in 1994 had been unlawful because it failed to make allowance for the possibility of a prisoner making exceptional progress while in jail. However, the amended policy unveiled by his successor, Mr Straw, last month, which allows for exceptional progress, was not unlawful.

Outside the court Winnie Johnson, the mother of Keith Bennett, whose body has never been found, said she was pleased by the court's decision.

"She's staying in prison which is the main thing, but I don't understand why she constantly keeps appealing. This is done with taxpayer's money, people work hard for someone so evil to keep doing this. This whole thing just seems to go on and I just want an end to it."

Ann West, the terminally ill mother of Lesley Ann Downey, said: "I will rest in peace but I will haunt that woman. I will be on her shoulder morning, noon and night."

Lord Longford, who was in court for the judgment, said: "The battle goes on. The justice of the case remains as before. It is quite iniquitous that any human being should be told they have to stay in prison until they die."

CAMERA PRESS

Myra Hindley: she may claim she has made exceptional progress while in prison

Boy dies in strangling game that went wrong

By Joanna Bale

POLICE warned parents and children yesterday of the dangers of a strangling game after a schoolboy died while experimenting with it.

Liam Hart, 11, was found unconscious in a bedroom at his home on Wednesday with a towelling cord from a dressing gown wrapped around his neck. His mother tried to revive him but he was dead on arrival at hospital.

Detectives said they believed Liam, from Stockport, Greater Manchester, had died playing a game that local children called "Rising Sun", in which they partially strangle themselves to get a tingling sensation.

Police said they believed that Liam had played it before. They were convinced he had not committed suicide and asked teachers and parents to be on the lookout for the activity, so-called because children's faces turn red as they half-strangle themselves.

Detective Inspector Kenny Caldwell, of Stockport police, said: "It's certainly a game the police have never heard of or one that teachers have been aware of. We have to find out who showed Liam how to play the game. We have had an indication he tried it before."

He added: "Anything along these lines interferes with the bloodstream and could have fatal consequences. I have an 11-year-old son myself and I shall be speaking to him."

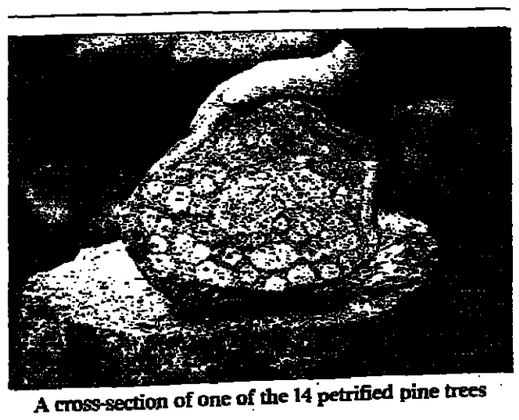
Liam was a pupil at Avondale High School in Cheadle Heath, where staff yesterday issued a warning about the game at assembly.

Eric Jackson, the head teacher, said he was very concerned about the circumstances of Liam's death. "Until this morning, I had no idea what 'Rising Sun' was. We have spoken to students and tried to give them the facts. We are trying our damnedest to make sure this doesn't happen to any other youngsters.

"Liam was a smashing little lad. He was everybody's next-door neighbour, a warm, friendly and caring lad. He always worked hard and was very eager to help and had lots and lots of friends."

Mr Jackson added that he had been told yesterday of an incident at another Stockport school, less than a fortnight ago, when a child had to be given medical treatment after playing the game. "In that case the outcome was not so tragic."

He added: "I spoke to some girls from my school this morning who had tried the 'Rising Sun' game and asked them if I should've known what was going on, but they told me, 'how could you?' "



A cross-section of one of the 14 petrified pine trees

Early Christmas trees unearthed

By Paul Wilkinson

THE 310 million-year-old ancestors of today's Christmas trees have been discovered during work at an opencast mining site.

Fourteen petrified trees, said to be the earliest examples of today's conifers, have been exposed at the Prior's Close site near Chester-le-Street, Co Durham. At first the primitive trees, some up to ten metres long, were thought to be giant ferns, but Professor Andrew Scott, a palaeo-botanist at the University of London, has identified them as very early pine trees — the first to be found in Britain.

Scientists are especially excited as, thanks to a flow of minerals into the trees shortly after they fell during a cataclysmic flood, their interior structures have been perfectly preserved.

At the time the trees were growing, the site was on the Equator and was a low-lying, hot and humid swamp. Experts believe the trees grew on higher ground on the edge of the swamp. The chemical composition of the swamp water helped to preserve the timber.

Brian Young, in charge of the Geological Survey's mapping exercise in the area, said: "I suppose it means that Co Durham is the home of the oldest Christmas trees in Britain."

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Dewar's 300-day Bill revises 300 years of history

By Shirley English

THE legislation that will create the first Scottish Parliament for almost 300 years was published yesterday by Donald Dewar, Scottish Secretary, who hailed it as an historic and radical document which would provide a "pathway" to a new constitutional framework for the United Kingdom.

Unveiling the Scotland Bill, Mr Dewar said: "In well under 300 days we have set in train the biggest change in three hundred years of Scottish history. The Government has moved quickly to keep our promise, the promise to deliver a Scottish Parliament."

He said the Bill fulfilled the ambitions of the Government's devolution White Paper, which had been given the clear and enthusiastic backing of Scots who voted in the referendum in September. It would establish a devolved Parliament in Edinburgh able to make its own laws and with the power to vary income tax by 3p in the pound. There were "no hidden taxes", he said. Echoing the words of the late John Smith, former Labour Party leader, Mr Dewar said the Parliament was "the settled will of the Scottish people" and called on the House of Lords not to delay or disrupt its passage through Parliament. He added: "This Bill will give Scotland the power to boost its self-confidence, economically, culturally and politically."

The Bill fleshes out the powers laid down in the devolution White Paper, published in July, with only a few minor alterations to plug the gaps. These include giving the Scottish Parliament the power to legislate on dangerous dogs, but reserving powers at Westminster over "outer space" and "dealing with an enemy".

Most notably the Scottish Parliament will be able to move at its own pace to legislate on the implementation of European laws. Scottish Ministers and officials will be able to participate in the Council of Ministers' meetings, but only as part of the UK delegation.

The Bill also outlines a more powerful "disciplinary" role than was first envisaged for the Scottish Secretary. He will be able to overrule the Parliament and halt legislation he believes is inappropriate, and he will have powers to ensure the UK's international treaties are implemented in Scotland.

The Scotland Bill will get its second reading in early January and will then go to a parliamentary committee. It is expected to receive Royal Assent in October and elections to the Scottish Parliament will be held in 1999. The Scottish Parliament will sit for the first time in 2000.

It will have a powerful new First Minister — equivalent to a Scottish Prime Minister — and a Presiding Officer, whose role will mirror that of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

The Bill includes the provision to review the number of Scottish MPs at Westminster through the Boundary Commission, as promised in the White Paper, and enshrines the sovereignty of the Crown: all Scottish Bills will require Royal Assent.

Powers to be reserved by Westminster powers include the UK constitution, foreign policy, macro-economic policy and fiscal and monetary affairs, employment legislation, social security policy, regulation of certain professions and transport safety.

The Bill was given a broad welcome yesterday by both the Scottish Nationalists and Liberal Democrats. However, both parties indicated they would be tabling amendments. Alex Salmond, leader of the SNP, said the Bill displayed some "Westminster paranoia" in retaining powers over such matters as the 1952 Hypnotism Act. He said the SNP would concentrate on tabling amendments to strengthen the Parliament's powers in Europe, on fiscal policy and broadcasting.

The Liberal Democrats would be asking for assurances that the Parliament be exempt from some sex discrimination laws so at least 40 per cent of MSPs would be women. They were also concerned that moral issues, such as abortion law, would be retained at Westminster.

Diary, page 20

MAIN POINTS

- Scottish Parliament will have 129 MSPs, with First Minister appointed by the Queen. First elections by proportional representation in 1999 and then every four years. Parliament will sit for first time in 2000.
- It will have powers to make laws on all domestic matters, including health, education, the law, transport, local government and the environment.
- A number of key powers will be reserved at Westminster, including the UK constitution, foreign policy, economic policy, defence, medical ethics, employment law and Europe.
- The Scottish Parliament will continue to receive its share of UK public expenditure in the form of the Scottish Block Grant, which is currently £14 billion.
- It will have powers by 2000-01 to vary the basic rate of income tax by 3p; this will be payable by UK residents who live more than half the year in Scotland.

Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar in Glasgow yesterday, where he described the new Scotland Bill as a radical and historic document

Westminster pays, but MPs will call the tune

Magnus Linklater believes the Scottish parliament will have immense influence

Yesterday may have been an "historic day for Scotland", but it was also a day for heavy reading. The Scotland Bill comes in at 40,000 words, 116 clauses and eight supplementary schedules. We are told it took 60,000 "person hours" to complete: it will thus be very politically correct.

It contains all the mind-numbing sub-sections that will determine whether the new Scottish parliament will work or not. There is much here for Tam Dalyell, MP, that master of the fine detail, to get his teeth into. He will find no answer to his famous "West Lothian question", but he will be struck by the constant emphasis on the continuing role of Westminster, the weight given to the Secretary of State for Scotland, and the significant voice Scotland is to have in Europe.

The central anomaly of Scottish MPs being allowed to vote on English matters, while English MPs have no equivalent say on Scottish matters, remains. However, from the very first clause, reading simply: "There shall be a Scottish Parliament", its remit is clearly set out. This is going to be a parliament wielding immense influence over civic affairs in Scotland — the health service, the criminal justice system, education and housing among others. It will still be financed by the block grant determined by Westminster, but within that it will have freedom of choice.

The Queen retains her traditional constitutional role. It is she who appoints the First Minister, as the Scottish Prime Minister will be known, somewhat bleakly. It is she who receives his resignation. It is she who dissolves a Scottish parliament under the Scottish Seal if a proclamation is made which alters the day set down for a general election — the first Thursday in May every five years. The seal referred to is the one under which the Act of Union was drawn up, so there is no doubting that the new Scottish parliament will be a unionist body.

The Secretary of State will retain a more powerful role than was at first thought. For example, if he thinks it necessary, he will be able to intervene to prohibit legislation from gaining Royal Assent. He will also have powers to prevent the Scottish executive from taking any action he believes is not in line with the United Kingdom's international treaties.

It is also clear that much thought has been given to the kind of members who will make up the parliament. Election will be by proportional representation, and individuals will be able to stand both on constituency and regional lists. The aim appears to be to loosen the party hold and to ensure that the parliament is not dominated by party hacks. Whether this will work in practice remains to be seen. Peers will be allowed to stand, as well as church ministers, so there will at the very least be greater diversity than in the Commons.

The post that will be watched with most interest is that of the Presiding Officer — the equivalent of the Speaker. This will be the first post to be filled — by election from among the members — and the incumbent will run the parliament's business. His remit seems to be vast, and it is he who will have to control and shape this emergent body as it develops committees, standing orders and all the familiar paraphernalia of a democratic instrument.

Perhaps the major surprise is the role that a new Scotland may acquire in Europe. Members of the Scottish parliament will be able to attend the European Council of Ministers as part of the UK delegation, and the Scottish Parliament will be given powers to legislate itself on European laws. The parliament will be given powers to deal directly with the European Union and, for instance, to move faster or slower than Westminster if it sees European legislation as helping or hindering.

Here, possibly, lie the seeds of conflict with Westminster. There will doubtless be many more.

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After Dolly, meet Polly the therapeutic lamb

Nigel Hawkes reports on how scientists have developed a technique for creating lambs to combat human disease

THE Scottish scientists responsible for Dolly the cloned sheep have now produced Polly — a lamb which makes a human blood-clotting protein.

Polly was made from sheep foetal cells, modified by the introduction of a human gene. As a clone she is less remarkable than Dolly, who was made from adult cells, but the technique used to make her is likely to prove more valuable in the long run.

She is not by any means the first animal made which is capable of producing human proteins in its milk. But the team at the Roslin Research Institute in Roslin, Midlothian, report in *Science* that their method is far more efficient than those used earlier, and can also be used to select the sex of the lamb.

The previous hit-or-miss method used at Roslin and elsewhere involved injecting the human gene into an egg, and then putting it back into a mother sheep in the hope that her lamb would express the human protein made by that gene in her milk. Only a minority did, so the method was wasteful — many pregnancies failed to produce transgenic lambs.

The new method makes it possible to ensure that the gene is integrated into the cells before they are used to replace the DNA in the egg. That creates a higher success rate.

Dr Ron James, managing director of PPL, the company linked to the Roslin Institute, said yesterday: "The production of transgenic livestock by nuclear transfer allows products to be developed far more rapidly and uses fewer animals than earlier methods. The technique also allows us to develop therapeutics that would previously have been impossible or uneconomical."

In Polly's case, the gene used was that which makes Factor IX, the blood-clotting agent which is missing in men with haemophilia B. At present, such men are treated with Factor IX extracted from human blood. But extracting it from sheep's milk should be cheaper and free from risks of infection, says the scientific team, led by Dr Angelika Schnieke.

Foetal cells were taken from Poll Dorset lambs, and the Factor IX gene inserted. The cells were maintained in culture and tested to see whether the gene had been successfully integrated. Only then were the cells inserted into eggs from Scottish Blackface ewes, from which the ewe's own DNA had been removed.

The eggs were then replaced in the ewes and brought to birth. Two problems emerged. The ewes did not give birth spontaneously, but had to be induced, and there was a high stillbirth rate of 46 per cent. It is hoped that further development of the technique will solve these problems.

Dr Ian Wilmut, the team leader, said the result was "tremendously encouraging, and a major step towards our goal of being able to make very precise genetic modifications in livestock species". The technique has been patented by the institute, which says it has great commercial potential.

Its success in producing Dolly is saluted by *Science* as "breakthrough of the year": It beat such achievements as the Mars Pathfinder mission, the extraction of Neanderthal DNA and the identification of strange sources of gamma rays in the sky.

Areas in which the Polly technology could be useful, the institute says, include transplantation of organs from pigs to humans, because it would allow the pigs to be modified so that their organs were not recognised as foreign by the human recipients.

JOHN CHADWICK/REUTERS

Polly the man-made lamb with her Scottish Blackface surrogate mother

Aids scare woman 'has clean bill of health'

BY PAUL WILKINSON

ONE of the two women at the centre of an Aids scare on Britain's largest army base said yesterday that a new blood test had proved she was not carrying the virus.

Lindsay Griffiths, 19, is awaiting confirmation of the test at a hospital near the base at Catterick, North Yorkshire. She said: "It is just such a relief to hear this news. I have been to hell and back these last few days and I feel angry at the way I have been treated."

Earlier this week Colonel Neil Donaldson, the garrison deputy commander, warned his 7,000 troops about "at least" two women who were diagnosed HIV-positive, but were continuing promiscuous liaisons with soldiers. He refused to identify them.

Miss Griffiths and her friend Charlotte "Bonnie" Clarke, 20, said they believed they were the women to whom he was referring. They live in Colburn near the base, and the activities at Miss Clarke's flat have been the subject of complaints by neighbours.

Man finds mouse baked in can of beans

BY JOANNA BALE

A SAINSBURY'S customer eating baked beans straight from the tin came across what he thought was a piece of string. He tugged at it and, to his horror, pulled out a mouse by the tail. The animal had been cooked in the tin.

The beans were bought in New Cross, south London, in November last year by Robert Howard, from Brockley in southeast London. This week HL Foods, which produced the own-brand beans for Sainsbury's, was fined £8,000 by magistrates at Greenwich, southeast London, after pleading guilty to offences under the Food Safety Act.

A spokeswoman for Lewisham council, which brought the prosecution, said yesterday: "Nobody knows for sure at what point of the process the mouse got in. The beans are sieved and blanched, tomato sauce is added and the tins are sealed and cooked at 130 degrees. The mouse's stomach was full of starch so it may have been eating the beans before it was boiled."

More than 12,000 tins from the same batch were removed from supermarket shelves by Sainsbury's. A spokeswoman for the company said: "Food safety is one of our top priorities. Any foreign object found in our products is taken very seriously and as soon as we knew there was a problem we launched an investigation with HL Foods, who immediately admitted liability.

"We are now satisfied that there are tighter measures in place at HL Foods and environmental health officers have also checked the factory and are fully satisfied."

Robin Brooks, sales and marketing director at HL Foods, of Long Sutton, Lincolnshire, said: "We undertook a detailed review of procedures and have tightened our already rigorous safety checks to ensure this incident never happens again."

The company, which still supplies Sainsbury's and other supermarket chains, is in discussions with Mr Howard over compensation.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hillary Clinton

First lady linked to pit town

Hillary Clinton has been invited to trace her family roots in the former mining community of Stanley in Co Durham in the North East.

Local historians believe Mrs Clinton, whose maiden name is Rodham, is linked to the Roddams who worked and lived in Durham pit villages in the last century. In 1883 the man thought to be her great grandfather, Jonathan Roddam, emigrated with his family to Pennsylvania. The county council has now invited Mrs Clinton to see where her family came from.

£1m damages

A man with an extreme form of cerebral palsy was awarded agreed damages of £1 million at the High Court in London. Alan Dix, 24, suffered severe asphyxiation shortly before birth at Westminster Hospital, London.

Drugs lesson

Dixons City Technology College, Bradford, the recipient of an award from West Yorkshire Police for its anti-drugs policy, has suspended two boys, aged 14 and 15, after they were found with cannabis during a routine search.

Wader count

The British Trust for Ornithology is appealing for bird-watchers to help it to complete a pan-European survey of shoreline waders by the end of January. Anyone interested should telephone 01842 750050.

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£2,500 to £24,999	5.00	5.11	4.00	4.07
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Direct Interest Savings Account

Credit Interest	Gross % p.a.	Gross CAR % p.a.	Net % p.a.	Net CAR % p.a.
£1 to £999	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.40
£1,000 to £2,499	4.75	4.83	3.80	3.85
£2,500 to £4,999	5.50	5.61	4.40	4.47
£5,000 to £49,999	6.65	6.81	5.32	5.42
£50,000 and over	7.00	7.18	5.60	5.71

Tax Free: the rate payable where the interest is exempt from the tax applicable to interest on savings.

Gross: the rate before the deduction of tax applicable to interest on savings.

Net: the rate after the deduction of tax applicable to interest on savings, currently 20%.

CAR: Compounded Annual Rate is the true gross/net return if the interest payments are retained in the account.

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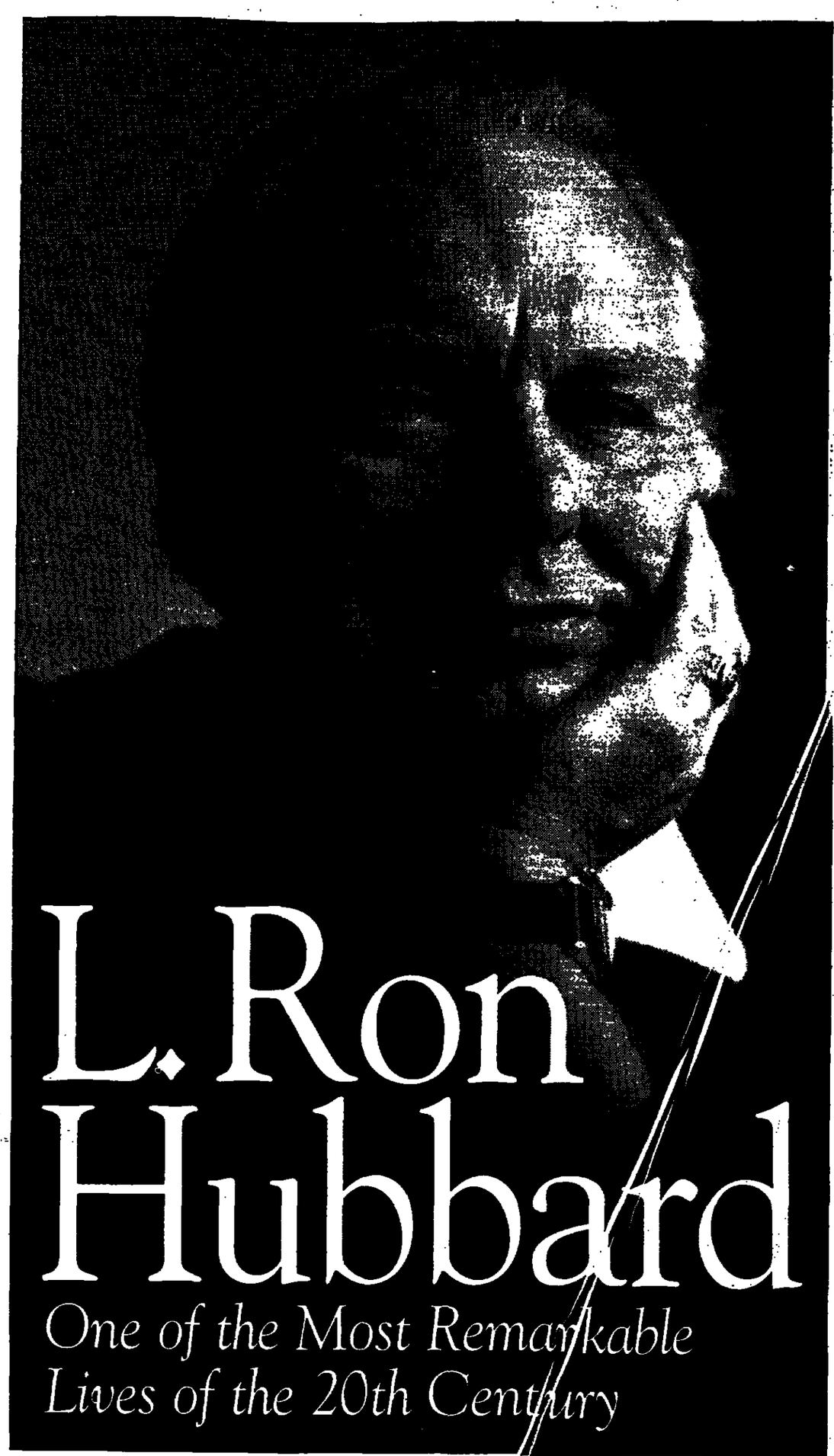

L. Ron Hubbard

One of the Most Remarkable Lives of the 20th Century

From friends who respect and admire him

"The gift of freedom from pain and upset that Ron has made available to me and the world, will not be forgotten."
John Travolta
Actor

"I have seen the results of the drug rehabilitation methods developed by L. Ron Hubbard and they can only be described as miraculous. I know no other person who has contributed so much for the benefit of so many."
Lord McNair
House of Lords

"I first realized he was a genius because of his contribution to my field. Later I discovered that his brilliance embraced the arts and humanities as well. L. Ron Hubbard was a true Renaissance man — philosopher, scientist, writer and artist."
William L. Marcus, Ph. D.
Internationally recognized Scientist and Toxicologist

"Future generations will live in a saner, happier and more peaceful world because of the enormous contributions of L. Ron Hubbard's writings and technology."
Anne Archer
Actress

"There are those men whose wisdom, honesty and teaching lift all others with them like the tide, to new heights of human excellence..... because they were here among us. Such a man was L. Ron Hubbard."
L. Fletcher Prouty
Colonel, United States Air Force, Retired

"Mr. Hubbard's technology saved my life. It doesn't get much better than that."
Kirstie Alley, *Actress*

"In my opinion, L. Ron Hubbard's work in the drug rehabilitation field IS 'the field of drug rehabilitation.' Finally, someone discovered why a person would turn to drugs and alcohol in their life and how to break free of those self-destructive patterns to live a happier, more productive life. He has given us a road out that would be more aptly named 'life rehabilitation.'"
Mark Isham
Grammy Award Winning Recording Artist and Academy Award Nominated Film Composer

"The gift L. Ron Hubbard has for you, me and all mankind is peace and freedom. Peace and freedom to discover and know."
Terry Jastrow
Seven-time Emmy Award Winning Producer/Director

"Having practiced medicine for fifty years, I have concluded that L. Ron Hubbard is clearly among that handful of individuals who have made remarkable and very major contributions to the betterment of the individual. That he had the courage to challenge outdated notions and introduce entirely workable ideas only underscores his greatness."
Theron G. Randolph, M.D.
Founder of the American Academy of Environmental Medicine

"A sensitive, uniquely spirited creative genius, whose unique discoveries, insights and understanding about the nature of man and life have brought peace of mind and comfort to millions. L. Ron Hubbard was one of the most brilliant minds of our time."
Professor Joseph Paige
Former President and Dean, Shaw Divinity School

"I have found many writers and teachers simply reiterate that which is known and accepted. Seldom in a lifetime does there come a man who challenges the axioms. L. Ron Hubbard was such a man. Not satisfied with the status quo he reached for the stars. In so doing he forced the rest of us to move from our complacency and to know why we believe what we believe.
Dr. Donald N. Sills
President, Coalition for Religious Freedom Washington, D.C.

"L Ron Hubbard set a star-high goal for us. He documented it with his writings and lectures. He taught it with pure love. He's left us nothing but pure inspiration."
Chick Corea
Eight-time Grammy Award Winning Musician

"L Ron Hubbard was an extraordinary human being whose contributions to education in the field of literacy should be applauded by all. An explorer, teacher, entrepreneur, writer, and staunch patriot, he followed his own path, never allowing anyone to set boundaries on what he could or would do. We should all learn from the example of his life, and strive to make ourselves and the world a better place."
Dr. Harry Kloor, Ph. D.
Producer, Writer, Educator

"Without a doubt, L. Ron Hubbard is one of the most prolific and influential writers of the 20th century."
Stephen V. Whaley
Professor of English and Foreign Languages

"Words cannot express my undying appreciation to Mr. L. Ron Hubbard, for fulfilling the prophesies of long ago, and bringing to man the way to spiritual freedom."
Mr. Fumio Sawada
Director
Sophis University, Japan

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You can also check the following Internet sites, available in five languages: http://www.scientology.org • http://www.lronhubbard.org • http://www.dianetics.org • email:info@scientology.org.

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Queen marks 65 years of Christmas messages

Alan Hamilton on a tradition that was launched on a collapsing chair

ON Christmas Day in 1932, a rather grumpy King George V left the family dinner table at Sandringham and went into a below-stairs office to deliver the first royal Christmas broadcast.

Apart from the chair collapsing under him as he sat down, it went well. The two microphones and red cue light were hidden in cabinets of Australian walnut and the table was covered with a heavy cloth to dampen the echo. Twenty million people heard the King's brief message of cheer, all of 250 words.

"Through one of the marvels of modern science," the King intoned, "I am enabled, this Christmas Day, to speak to all my peoples throughout the Empire. I take it as a good omen that wireless should have reached its present perfection at a time when the Empire has been linked in closer union."

That the world could hear the King-Emperor live was regarded as a technical marvel, and the harbinger of even more astonishing things to come. *The Observer* newspaper, with rare percipience, commented: "The time is not far distant when it will be possible for the remotest exile not only to hear the voice of the King, but to see His Majesty in the act of utterance."

That time, it transpired, was a mere quarter-century distant. Christmas radio broadcasts had continued through the war, and King George VI's addresses to his embattled people had been a source of inspiration. Then in 1954 the BBC approached the freshly crowned Queen Elizabeth II with the suggestion that she give her Christmas message on television. She demurred, saying the time for such innovation had not yet arrived. She relented in 1957, having earlier that year spoken directly to camera during a tour of Canada, a royal innovation that was particularly well received. It was also the 25th anniversary of George V's first wireless address.

George V made the first Christmas broadcast and George VI continued to do so through the war years

Antony Craxton, a veteran BBC producer who had been a schoolmate of Prince Philip at Gordonstoun, was despatched to Sandringham on Christmas Day, as were an army of BBC and Post Office engineers and linesmen. The Queen, unused to addressing her subjects live on camera, was very nervous, but was coached in calm by her husband, who had made a number of live studio appearances.

By today's standards, it was a stilted performance, the script as stiff as the set. "My own family often gather round to watch television, as they are at this moment, and that is how I imagine you now," the Queen said.

"I very much hope that this new medium will make my Christmas message more personal and direct. It is inevitable that I should seem a rather remote figure to many of you — a successor to the kings and queens of history, someone whose face may be familiar in newspapers and films but who never really touches your personal lives. But now, at least for a few minutes, I welcome you to the peace of my own home."

The broadcast went down a storm, at home and abroad. British newspapers spoke of "a calm, relaxed, shrewd young woman speaking with an easy friendliness". American newspapers printed the text in full.

Live transmission was quickly abandoned. Half the Commonwealth was receiving it in the middle of night; besides, it interrupted family dinner at Sandringham. The message has been pre-recorded every year since 1959.

Like *The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show*, the Queen's broadcast became part of the fabric of Christmas tradition. But not any more. The BBC calculated the number of viewers for the 1985 broadcast to be 17.4 million. By 1993 it had slipped marginally to 16.3 million. Recently there has been a sharper decline: last year's official viewing figure was a mere 11 million, rather less than the audience for the special Christmas edition, later in the day, of *Only Fools And Horses*.

This cartoon by Alasdair Hilleary was commissioned by the Princess Royal for the Queen's golden wedding anniversary, which was celebrated last month

Record viewers expected this year

AFTER years of declining interest at home, the Queen's traditional Christmas broadcast is likely to attract its biggest audience this year, with television companies around the world scrambling to screen it in full.

Demand for the programme has been stimulated by the death of Diana, Princess of Wales; broadcasters are hoping the Queen will refer to her former daughter-in-law. Buckingham Palace resolutely refused to disclose the content of the Queen's message yesterday.

It will not, as some expected, be live from Sandringham. The Queen recorded it at Windsor earlier this week and copies are already on their way to remoter parts of the Commonwealth.

The programme will be broadcast on all major British television and radio networks at 3pm. It will be offered for simultaneous transmission around the world by major television networks, including CNN, Reuters and Associated Press, who in the past have taken only brief news clips. It will also be shown on British Airways long-haul flights leaving from Heathrow and Gatwick airports and will be available on the Internet on both the Buckingham Palace Website — *www.royal.gov.uk* — and the ITN website — *www.itn.co.uk*. The broadcast is being produced by ITN for the first time.

War museum in the firing line

By Russell Jenkins

A £40 MILLION project to build an Imperial War Museum for the North was thrown into doubt yesterday when the Heritage Lottery Fund rejected an application for the bulk of the funding.

The museum, to be built alongside the new Lowry Centre on industrial wasteland beside the Manchester Ship Canal in Trafford, was expected to house historic weapons and war art.

The futuristic design, produced by the Polish-American architect Daniel Libeskind, had already provoked controversy. The building, which took the form of three giant shards, symbolised battles on land, sea and air. The 6,000 sq ft building was said to resemble a "broken globe shattered by the wars of the early 20th century". Much of the weaponry and archive material due to go on display has never been on public view.

Its supporters believe the scheme would attract 400,000 visitors a year, but the lottery fund trustees say the project does not fit in with their policy of "doing more for less".

The Imperial War Museum had asked for £22 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It has already attracted £8.16 million from the local European Regional Development Fund. The museum's supporters were shocked by the decision and immediately appealed to Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary.

The trustees said the amount of money for such projects had been cut back since the setting up of the sixth "good cause", the New Opportunities Fund.

They also took the view that the Manchester Museum of Science and Technology, the City Art Gallery and the Manchester Museum have already benefited substantially from a joint £36 million lottery funding pledge.

Bulgaria in Crisis

Special to Times Readers

LEFT TO FREEZE

Yordan, 19, already malnourished could die from cold and hunger this winter unless aid reaches him now. With temperatures plummeting Yordan's scant clothing and no shoes offer him little protection from the bitter cold and there is no money to heat his orphanage. There are 37,000 places in Bulgaria's orphanages.

Cold weather alert – 8°C yesterday

No Money To Feed The Children
No Money To Heat The Orphanages

Bulgaria is a country in the midst of a serious economic crisis. Now thousands of children are suffering terribly as Siberian temperatures hit the country. Urgent help is needed.

There is little money to heat the orphanages. Orphanage Directors are having to beg for food from local villages and rarely know where the next meal is coming from. In some areas children, like Yordan, are going hungry and the cold could prove fatal for many children this winter. Without aid this could be catastrophic for Bulgaria's orphanage children.

The European Children's Trust, sister charity of The Romanian Orphanage Trust, is ready to distribute emergency food packs, clothes and fuel to the orphanages in most need.

Your gift today will save lives and bring hope.

£25 could buy enough emergency food to feed 20 orphanage children for a week. [illegible] orphanage for 3 days.

Please send whatever you can to help children survive the winter or call 01273 299399 NOW

I enclose £____ to save Bulgarian orphanage children. Cheques to The European Children's Trust. Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card

Card no ____ Expiry date ____

Signature ____ Date ____

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms ____

Address ____

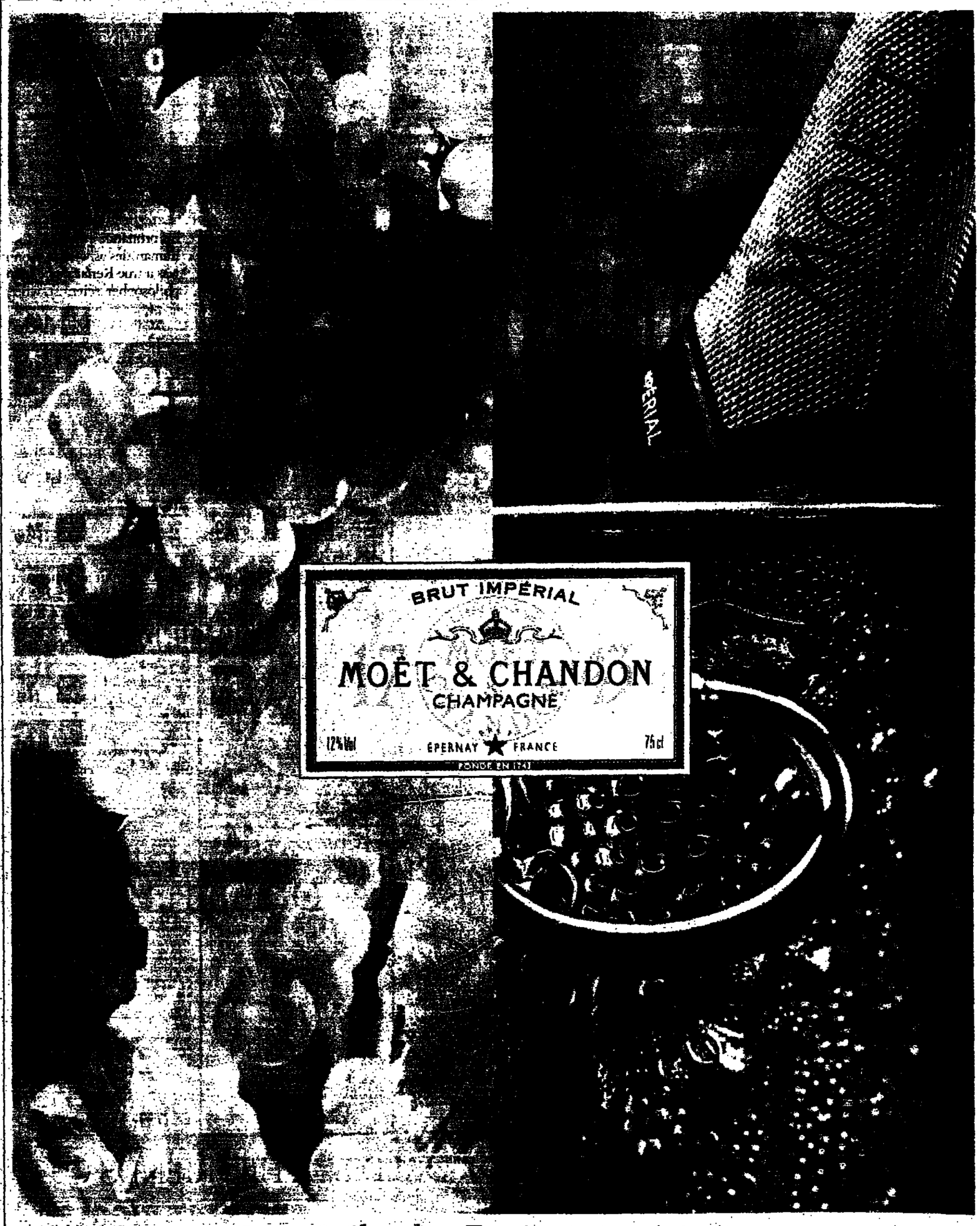
____ Postcode ____

Telephone no. ____

Return to: Tanya Barron, (T10), Bulgaria Emergency Appeal, The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST KER350, 44d Queen Street, LONDON, EC4B 4AR or call 01273 299399 NOW. Registered Charity No. 1048737

The European Children's Trust

Please act NOW - winter is here



— Moët & Chandon. Turning nature into art —

Harman enrages disability group at talks on cuts

BY JILL SHERMAN AND PHILIP WEBSTER

DISABILITY campaigners were furious yesterday at Harriet Harman's failure to offer them any assurance that benefits for the sick and disabled would not be cut.

During a meeting with the all-party disablement group, led by Lord Ashley of Stoke, Ms Harman, the Social Security Secretary, promised better consultation on future changes. But she would not rule out cuts, taxation or means testing for any of the six disability benefits that now cost the Exchequer £24 billion a year. She also raised the possibility of money being given to local councils to hand out as they thought necessary rather than her department paying benefit to individual claimants.

After the hour-long meeting, Lord Ashley, a former Labour minister, expressed his disappointment and frustration. "Disabled people will have a miserable Christmas," he said. "I've had lots of letters from people who are worried, frightened and anxious and hardly dare turn on the television in case they hear about further cutbacks."

He said that he would continue to demand a categorical undertaking from Ms Harman that there would be no cuts. "We said we supported the review of the Welfare to Work programme on condition that there were no cuts in individual welfare or disability benefits. Harriet Harman has not given that undertaking."

Ms Harman later suggested that existing claimants would be protected but that new claimants could find benefits reduced, or even abolished. "We cannot say we will continue with the status quo. We would only do that if we thought the system was working well and it isn't."

Lord Ashley said that Ms Harman had agreed to meet the group again in January but he complained that she had failed to give straight answers to any of the questions put forward.

Members of the group, which included Lord Rix, chairman of Mencap, and the Tory MPs Angela Browning and Peter Bottomley, asked Ms Harman what the remit of the review was and if it had been specifically set up to save money. She is said to have skirted round the subject, merely saying the point was to provide opportunities for people to find work, while protecting those who could not.

Yesterday's meeting came after the Cabinet held another lengthy debate about what its members accept is the most sensitive problem facing the Government this Parliament. Although Mr Blair's determination to push through reform was endorsed, ministers agreed that the Government must explain its intentions better than it had over the cuts in benefits for single parents.

It was agreed that a Green Paper setting out changes to the welfare state would be published in February. There was also said to be agreement with John Prescott's remark that it should establish a "consensus for change".

Ministers deeply regret that the first test of their resolve to carry out radical change came on a Tory-imposed cut. But they believe that it could help to prepare the party for comprehensive reform based on getting people into work.

Mr Blair told the Cabinet that the social security budget amounted to more than the total spent on health, education and defence. He said: "We have to get the welfare state back to the principles on which it was founded, which is underlining the importance of work, helping those who are in need." He added that people would support what the Government was seeking to do once the facts were presented.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, said that the Government would rightly be judged on whether it mounted a successful attack on poverty. He told colleagues: "We have got to get the facts out about how the welfare state is not helping those most in need."

Mr Blair's spokesman refused to discuss whether individual benefits such as child benefit or disability and sickness allowances would be affected. But he said that the Government could not get into a position where it had to defend every benefit to every person, and he highlighted increasing reports of people on sickness and disability allowances who should not be claiming it. He insisted that the premise of the review was not to introduce "Tory" cuts. It was to alleviate poverty.

Lord Ashley after meeting Harriet Harman yesterday

Tories prefer Blair to Hague

BY PETER RIDDELL

MORE Tory supporters like Tony Blair than like William Hague, their own leader, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, underlines the sharp contrast in popularity between the two leaders. Mr Hague has a serious problem in establishing his identity and personality with the voters.

In June, just after he was elected Tory leader, three fifths of the public did not have a view either way about him. This has now fallen to a quarter. The bad news for him is that most of the previous don't knows have shifted to not liking him. While the proportion liking him has risen from 18 to 24 per cent since June, the number disliking him has jumped from 20 to 50 per cent. The swing against him has been even across the social and age spectrum. Unusually for a Tory leader, he is almost as unpopular among those aged over 55 as among 18 to 24-year-olds.

Mr Hague has the further problem that he is also disliked by many Tory supporters. Those saying that they would vote Tory on balance dislike rather than like Mr Hague by 42 to 39 per cent. However, these Tories like Mr Blair by a 51 to 42 per cent margin. This ties in with the monthly approval ratings. Dissatisfaction with the way that Mr Hague is doing his job as Conservative leader is as high among Tory supporters as among the public as a whole.

There has also been a doubling since June in the proportion disliking Mr Hague's policies to 52 per cent, while the number liking his policies has risen from 14 to just 22 per cent.

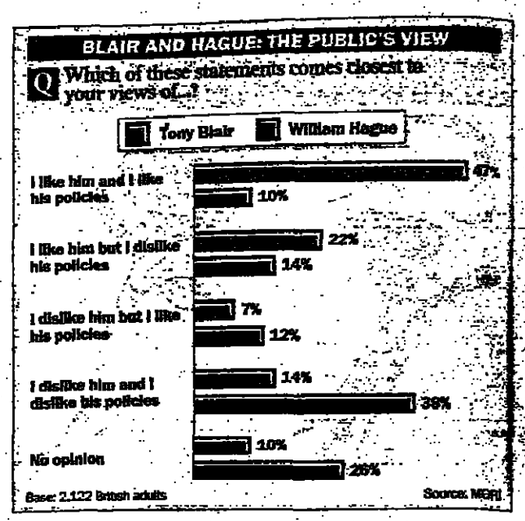
Before the election, the public disliked Tory policies even more than now, though, on balance, they liked John Major. He was roughly twice as popular as his successor.

By contrast, Mr Blair has become even more liked by the public during the course of this year. Last January, he was liked rather than disliked by 53 to 35 per cent. This has increased to a 69 to 21 per cent margin. The proportion liking rather than disliking his policies has risen from a net balance of plus 8 to plus 18 points.

Admittedly, Mr Blair's net approval rating — measuring those satisfied *minus* those dissatisfied with his performance — has fallen from plus 50 to plus 34 points since late November. Among Labour supporters, his net rating has dipped from plus 80 to plus 73 points. But these ratings are still higher than Mr Major ever enjoyed and higher even than the post-Falklands peak of Margaret Thatcher.

The MORI economic optimism index — measuring those thinking that the general economic condition of the country will improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months — is now minus 4 points. This compares with plus 6 points in late November and is the lowest rating since last December.

☐ *MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 2,122 adults from December 12 to 15.*



New Labour's honeymoon is still going strong

ONE of the most frequent, and silliest, political comments of the autumn has been that the Blair Government's honeymoon is over, or is about to end. This has been forecast every time the Government has hit a problem, whether the Bernie Ecclestone affair or the row over single-parent benefits. But it has not happened.

The ratings of both Tony Blair and Labour remain at near record levels. Even the sharp drop this month in satisfaction with Mr Blair and the Government only removes some of the shine from the post-election gloss and still leaves their ratings well above the levels of the Thatcher and Major years. At the same time, Labour's two-to-one lead over the Tories has hardly narrowed yet.

Two related factors are at work. First, the vast majority of the public believes that the Government still deserves the benefit of the doubt. Having taken the decisive step of changing the party in office on May 1, voters want to give Labour a chance to prove itself. While people are not starry-eyed about what the Government — any government can do — and about what is likely to happen to taxes, they agree with its broad aims and what it has done so far.

Secondly, the public remains disillusioned with the Tories. The voters' verdict on May 1 was not just a rejection of John Major, whom the public rather liked personally. It was more fundamental, about the divided state of the Tory party. Just as Labour lost the confidence of the public in the early 1980s, so have the Tories now. That is reflected in a series of indicators — party image, where the Tories are now behind not only Labour but also the Liberal Democrats; the poor results of both the Winchester and Beckenham by-elections (where the party retained only three fifths of its May 1 vote); and William Hague's abysmal ratings. The public is not yet interested in listening to the Tories, or ready to forgive them for past errors. So even when satisfaction with the Government drops, as this month, voters are still unwilling to prefer the Tories to Labour.

The Blair team will regard these trends as a vindication for its step-by-step strategy of proving that Labour can be trusted in office after so long in opposition. But that does not mean that awkward decisions on taxes and spending can be postponed indefinitely.

The Government has so far managed to avoid unpopularity by raising spending on popular programmes through a series of hidden and indirect tax increases (on pension funds, the windfall levy on privatised utilities and by raiding the National Lottery). But there is a limit to such easy options. If the comprehensive spending review is to succeed, there will have to be real cuts in some programmes, notably social security, to finance growth elsewhere. These tensions will test the Government's popularity, as will any slowdown in the economy and

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

halt to the steady decline in unemployment.

The sensible Tory response to these poll ratings is to be patient and to think long-term, as Mr Hague is doing with his far-reaching proposals to change party organisation and internal democracy as a first step towards winning back public confidence. By contrast, some Tory spokesmen are making a mistake in making strident attacks on the Government. The public is neither impressed nor convinced. Far better to be measured, which is in tune with the public mood.

Nonetheless, the Tories do have a problem with Mr Hague. His strong public performances, both at the party conference and often at Prime Minister's Questions, are not getting through to people. After being initially non-commital about him, many voters, including Tory supporters, are now taking a hostile view of his leadership. That will be hard to shift.

PETER RIDDELL

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Doctors urge caution as Yeltsin announces return to Kremlin

Richard Beeston sees a bullish President confound claims that he is too ill to rule

Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, visiting President Yeltsin at the clinic yesterday

PRESIDENT YELTSIN'S doctors yesterday cautioned him to stay in hospital a little longer after he announced that he was feeling better and would be back at work in the Kremlin today.

The initial announcement by Mr Yeltsin was a blow for his detractors who have been hinting that it is time Russia had a leader whose health could be relied upon.

After an eight-day absence from public view, when doctors confined him to the Barvikha sanatorium outside Moscow to recover from a bad cold, the Russian leader looked and sounded much better.

"I am ending my stay here," said Mr Yeltsin. "Tomorrow I return to work and from the new year I will be back to a full-scale schedule," he added, admonishing journalists for reporting that his absence was due to a recurring heart ailment.

"Everything is all right with me. My illness is not related to any heart problems. It was indeed a cold and there had been a danger of complications," he said.

Barely five hours later, a presidential spokesman said that Mr Yeltsin "could remain hospitalised on the advice of his doctors".

Coming so soon after the President's bullish comments, however, the Kremlin spokesman explained that Mr Yeltsin had simply been "expressing his desire" to resume work. "The issue [of his departure] is currently being studied. His stay [at the clinic] could be extended, on medical advice, maybe by a day, maybe more," the official added.

Although the holiday season is normally a quiet period in Russian politics, Mr Yeltsin may find himself back at the centre of a battle with the opposition-dominated parliament, which has taken advantage of the Kremlin leader's absence to score points against the Government.

Yesterday deputies in the Duma, the lower house of parliament, passed a motion condemning Mr Yeltsin's unexpected offer in Stockholm to cut the number of nuclear warheads by a one third and to slash conventional forces in the northwest region by 40 per cent.

The motion described the offers as "irresponsible and misplaced" and "inconsistent with Russia's laws".

The language of the motion suggested that the Duma was in no mood to ratify Russia's Start 2 agreement with America to reduce strategic nuclear weapons, a move President Clinton has said he wants completed before he visits Russia next year.

Of more pressing concern to the Kremlin leader is the fate of next year's budget which past its first reading thanks to his intervention. However, the Duma has postponed the second reading until Wednesday and it now seems unlikely it will be ready before the end of the year.

"We must have a confirmed budget in the new year," said Mr Yeltsin.

☐ Air chief sacked: Mr Yeltsin yesterday dismissed General Viktor Prudnikov, the chief of Russia's air defence forces, the President's press service reported.

No explanation was given for the decree dismissing the 58-year-old general. However, the move was widely seen as part of the planned merger of Russia's air force and air defence forces into a single force in 1998.

Late last year, General Prudnikov was named chief of military co-operation headquarters of the Commonwealth of Independent States, a loose alliance that replaced the former Soviet Union. The general will apparently continue to hold that post. *(AP)*

Traitor Philby tried suicide, widow reveals

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

KIM PHILBY, the Soviet double agent who betrayed Britain during the Cold War, tried to take his own life soon after defecting to Moscow in the 1960s, according to a book written by his widow.

Nearly a decade after Britain's most famous traitor died and was buried with full KGB honours in Moscow, Rufina Philby, the spy's fourth wife, said that she had written about their life together to rehabilitate his battered reputation.

Philby is despised to this day by the British intelligence community for decades of treachery which led to the deaths of scores of agents and the compromising of clandestine operations and the best kept secrets of the West. However, his widow cast him in a different light. "I spent the best part of 20 years with him and I wanted to write about the real man, not the figure of legend, but the intelligent, kind and very ordinary person he was," she said at the launch of her book, *I Went My Own Way*.

"Literally from the first day we met I forgot that he was an intelligence agent and his worldwide reputation," she said, speaking with genuine devotion. "He was a marvellous man. I never met another like him."

Although the book, the latest of dozens written about the most famous double agent this century, does not expose any new espionage sensations, it does go some way to explaining how a senior member of the British establishment had to adapt to an alien existence in Soviet Russia. Mrs Philby said that her husband appreciated the country because of his love of Russian culture and literature and his knowledge about the country's history, despite the fact that his spoken Russian was never fluent.

The book is accompanied by photographs of Philby seen fishing, picnicking and touring across the Soviet Union and its East Bloc satellite states, including Bulgaria and Cuba.

It is also clear that he did not fit into Soviet society, was treated with suspicion by the KGB, where some feared he was a triple agent, and missed his life in Britain. The book reveals that it was not until 1977, 14 years after his arrival in Russia, that he was invited to visit the infamous headquarters of the Soviet secret police at Lubyanka Square.

> ❛ He missed little luxuries such as whisky and coarse-cut Oxford marmalade ❜

"He could not forget his homeland," said Mrs Philby, commenting on the spy's well-known love for whisky and *The Times* cricket reports. She was also reminded by former KGB agents present at the book launch how little luxuries, like "coarse cut Oxford marmalade" and other delicacies unavailable in Russia, were routinely sent back to Philby's home in Moscow from agents based in London.

Nevertheless she insisted that he never wanted to return home and that he realised that the country he had left had probably changed beyond all recognition.

Philby never openly displayed any doubts about his decision to betray his country, nor his apparently unshakeable faith in communism. This was acquired during his undergraduate years at Cambridge in the 1930s and reinforced during the Spanish Civil War, when he was a correspondent for *The Times*, while also beginning his spying career for the Soviet Union.

However, the new book does for the first time reveal how, soon after his defection he had attempted suicide. "Then in the 1960s he tried without success to take his own life by slashing his veins," wrote his widow. "Once by accident I detected deep scars on his left wrist and I instinctively pulled back." She asked him what had happened, but Philby just took a sip of whisky and, in an unusual voice, replied: "We Communists must endure, be strong and never give in to weakness."

Despite the shaky start in Russia, Philby did gradually settle into life in his adopted homeland, where he was given a comfortable but modest flat near Pushkin Square in central Moscow. The KGB used him to brief new agents being sent to London and his analysis of the British establishment was always highly valued by Soviet intelligence.

Mrs Philby said that her husband was broadly in favour of the changes undertaken by Mikhail Gorbachev to reform the Soviet system in the perestroika years, but she was certain that he would not have approved of the chaos and poverty of modern Russia under President Yeltsin's rule.

Three years ago she raised £150,000 by auctioning books and memorabilia at Sotheby's in London, when her widow's pension dropped to the equivalent of about £3 a month. "It was very hard for me to part with those objects, but I could not survive any other way," she said.

Despite the sale of some items, her husband's study today remains exactly the way it was when he died. Amid the books are two of his most cherished possessions: a picture of Che Guevara and another of the Hotel Normandie, his favourite bar in Beirut, from where he defected on a Soviet ship in 1963. The book may reveal more about Philby, but leaves open the mystery of why he betrayed his country. It will not be the last word on his life.

SERGEI KARPUKHIN / REUTERS

Rufina Philby signs a book about her life with a spy at its launch in Moscow. "I write about the real man, not the figure of legend," she said

Antigua charges Welsh islander with murder bid

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

A WELSHMAN, Cyril "Taffy" Bufton, caretaker of Guiana Island, off Antigua's coast in the eastern Caribbean, has been charged with attempted murder after a shooting incident involving the brother of the country's leading politician.

Mr Bufton, 73, from Brecon, Powys, is accused of shooting his lawyer, Vere Bird Jr, the brother of Antigua's Prime Minister, Lester Bird, after an argument in his legal chambers on Tuesday. Mr Bird Jr had been representing Mr Bufton in a long-running dispute with the Government over its efforts to evict him and his wife, Bonny Bufton, from the island which has been their home for 32 years.

Mr Bird Jr, 61, remained in hospital yesterday with a bullet lodged in his throat. In a statement issued from his hospital bed in St John's, the Antiguan capital, he accused Mr Bufton of shooting him. He said: "Bufton was very depressed and desolate. He reached into his pocket and pulled a gun and shot me."

The altercation occurred soon after the Antigua and Barbuda parliament passed a Bill to evict the Buftons from Guiana to make way for a $300 million (£184 million) tourist resort proposed by a Malaysian investor. Work on the project is to begin next month.

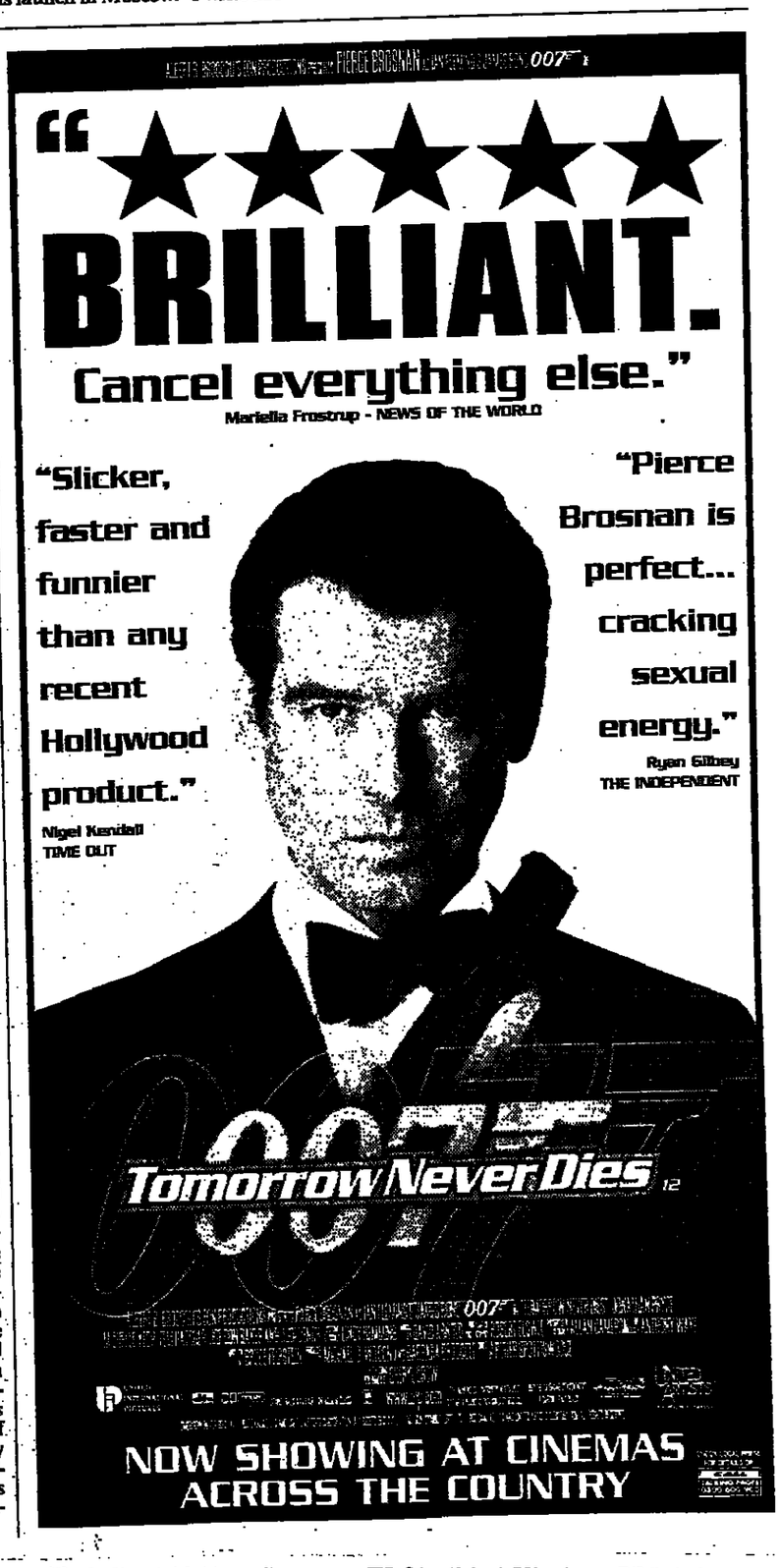
Friends of Mr Bufton say the circumstances of the shooting remain unclear. "I don't think Taffy went there to kill him," Winston Derrick, editor of *The Daily Observer*, said. "Maybe he pulled out the gun in frustration and it went off accidentally in a struggle."

The Buftons, who grew up in Brecon, moved to Guiana in the 1950s to manage the island for its owner, Alexander Hamilton-Hill, a British lawyer. At one time they supervised 120 cotton pickers.

In its heyday, the island attracted nobility, including Princess Margaret and the Earl of Snowdon who visited during their honeymoon in 1961. On the death of their benefactor, the estate was sold but the Buftons clung to a five-acre property where they lived in a ramshackle building, relied on rain for water and car batteries to power electricity. They had no telephone.

Supporters of the Buftons, who have nurtured the wildlife on the island, especially the fallow deer, are critical of the "Asian Village" resort deal. They say it represents a "giveaway" of Antiguan land.

The Prime Minister says the project is necessary to bring jobs to Antigua. With 2,000 hotel rooms eventually planned, the Asian Village promises to be one of the largest developments in the Eastern Caribbean. The developer, Tan Kay Hock, hopes to build a "playground of the rich and famous". The island will house six resorts, a 40,000 sq ft casino and beach-front rooms offering guests "your own private piece of ocean". Environmentalists say the project will endanger wildlife, including the West Indies whistling duck and the tropical mocking bird.



KATHERINE GANTER / AP

Children who were freed by the gunman after their ordeal at the Rigsbee Child Development Centre holding hands as they are escorted yesterday to an elementary school to receive counselling by chaplains and social workers

FLOR CORDERO / REUTERS

Gunman holds two sons hostage in Dallas siege

More child and adult hostages have been freed as the standoff enters its second day, **Giles Whittell** writes

A WEALTHY Dallas suburb was reeling from shock yesterday after a gunman took 61 children and six adults hostage in a day-care centre. As the incident entered a second day, the two captives remaining were the gunman's son and stepson.

The gunman, identified as James Monroe Lipscomb, released most of the hostages in groups of up to 20 as police lay siege to the day-care centre in Plano on Wednesday afternoon. Friends concluded that he had "flipped" because of marital problems.

Elite tactical units arrived from Dallas yesterday to replace exhausted police who had manned a cordon round the Rigsbee Child Development Centre throughout Wednesday night. Bruce Glasscock, Plano police chief, said: "We are in for a long haul. We will be here as long as there is any chance of bringing out any more of the hostages."

The incident began soon after 3pm on Wednesday when a gunman botched a robbery attempt at a cash dispensing machine outside a branch of the Plano Bank and Trust near the day-care centre, 20 miles north of Dallas. He then ran into the centre brandishing a handgun.

"We were hiding in the closet from him," said Kelli Burden, nine, after her release. "When he entered he was yelling cuss-words at us."

Among those able to flee Mr Lipscomb's hostage-taking was his estranged wife, Kristen Shaw. She worked at the centre and had words with him there in recent weeks, one of her colleagues said.

Most of the hostages, including dozens of toddlers were freed in groups of between ten and 20 during the afternoon and night. Distraught parents rushed to the centre on hearing of the incident and prayed in groups during the tense hours between developments. One woman was shown on local television breaking down uncontrollably when told her child was being held captive.

As helicopters from police SWAT teams and local news stations hovered over the centre, parents and children who were reunited were offered counselling by chaplains and social workers at a nearby elementary school.

Some children emerged red-eyed from crying, but none appeared to have been injured; some seemed unaware of the danger, having been allowed to watch videos. "He said he was not going to harm anyone," said Kelli. One child's first words to his mother were: "Mum, I am hungry."

Police negotiators set up a hot-line to Mr Lipscomb and kept him talking through the night, but it was unclear yesterday what, if any, demands he had made. Though officials refused to confirm his name, Mr Lipscomb was identified as the suspect by friends and family.

His nephew, Terrance Shaw, 15, related a recent conversation in which his uncle gave a warning that "a moment of madness can lead to a lifetime of sadness. You get mad at somebody and you go out there and shoot them. Right now, he is not in his right mind," the teenager said.

Others who knew Mr Lipscomb as a reasonable man were equally baffled. "I don't know what made him flip," said Oretha Griggs, a friend of his wife. "This is out of character. He's a kind person."

Briana Stanberry, a former neighbour, said: "I don't know why he would do anything like this. He has never done anything like it before."

Mr Lipscomb, 33, who owns his own janitorial business, moved out of a house he shared with his immediate family and up to nine others last month after a row with his wife. Friends said the couple were planning to divorce.

His two children, Xavier, 8, his stepson, and Monroe, 4, still being held captive, had been with their mother at the day care centre. They had tried to leave as the others were being freed, witnesses said.

But their father stopped them, yelling, "Get back here, get back here". The six adults taken hostage were released early in the siege, a fourth shortly before midnight and two more at 4am yesterday.

Ron Thompson, a father waiting for news of his child on Wednesday evening, said: "This guy's deranged. If I could exchange my life for the kids, I would do it."

The siege, without bloodshed so far, is the latest in a series of similar actions by distressed men who endanger the lives of innocents because of personal grudges. In 1991, 30 people were held hostage by four Thai gunmen in a California electronic store. In the same city, Sacramento, a single gunman held up 60 people in an eight-and-a-half hour siege at a high school the following year.

In 1988, James Harvey, a heavily armed fanatic protesting about the plight of the homeless in the United States, kidnapped 26 youngsters at a junior school in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. That siege ended without injury.

Trish Martinez embraces her three-year-old grandson, Mark, after he was released

British stars dominate Golden Globes

KATE WINSLET, Helena Bonham Carter and Dame Judi Dench dominated the nominations for Best Actress in this year's Golden Globe awards, selected by the frequently-criticised Hollywood Foreign Press Association and traditionally a guide to the year's Oscar winners.

Winslet's nomination was one of eight for James Cameron's three-hour epic, *Titanic*, which was also nominated for Best Dramatic Film, Best Actor and Best Director. *Titanic*'s rivals for Best Dramatic Film are Steven Spielberg's *Amistad*, *The Boxer*, starring Daniel Day-Lewis, *Good Will Hunting* and *LA Confidential*. Nominees for the year's Best Comedy or Musical include *As Good as it Gets*, which stars Jack Nicholson in his most acclaimed role in years, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, *Wag The Dog*, and *Men in Black*.

The Best Actress category also includes Jody Foster and Jessica Lange for their roles in *Contact* and *A Thousand Acres* respectively. Ms Bonham Carter is thought to be a favourite for the prize, having won two Best Actress awards so far from the Los Angeles and New York Film Critics Associations.

Kate Winslet's co-star in *Titanic*, Leonardo Di Caprio, won a nomination for Best Actor, as did Daniel Day-Lewis, who plays an Irish pugilist in *The Boxer*. Djimon Hounsou, the slaves' leader in *Amistad*, Peter Fonda in an acclaimed comeback role in *Ulee's Gold*, and Matt Damon, Hollywood's latest matinee idol and the star of *Good Will Hunting*.

The Golden Globes will be presented in a ceremony televised live on January 18. Even though they are voted on by just 90 film reporters, only 60 per cent of whom are full-time journalists, the Golden Globes have won increasing clout with the studios.

Winslet: one of the eight nominations for *Titanic*

New curbs for Net data firms

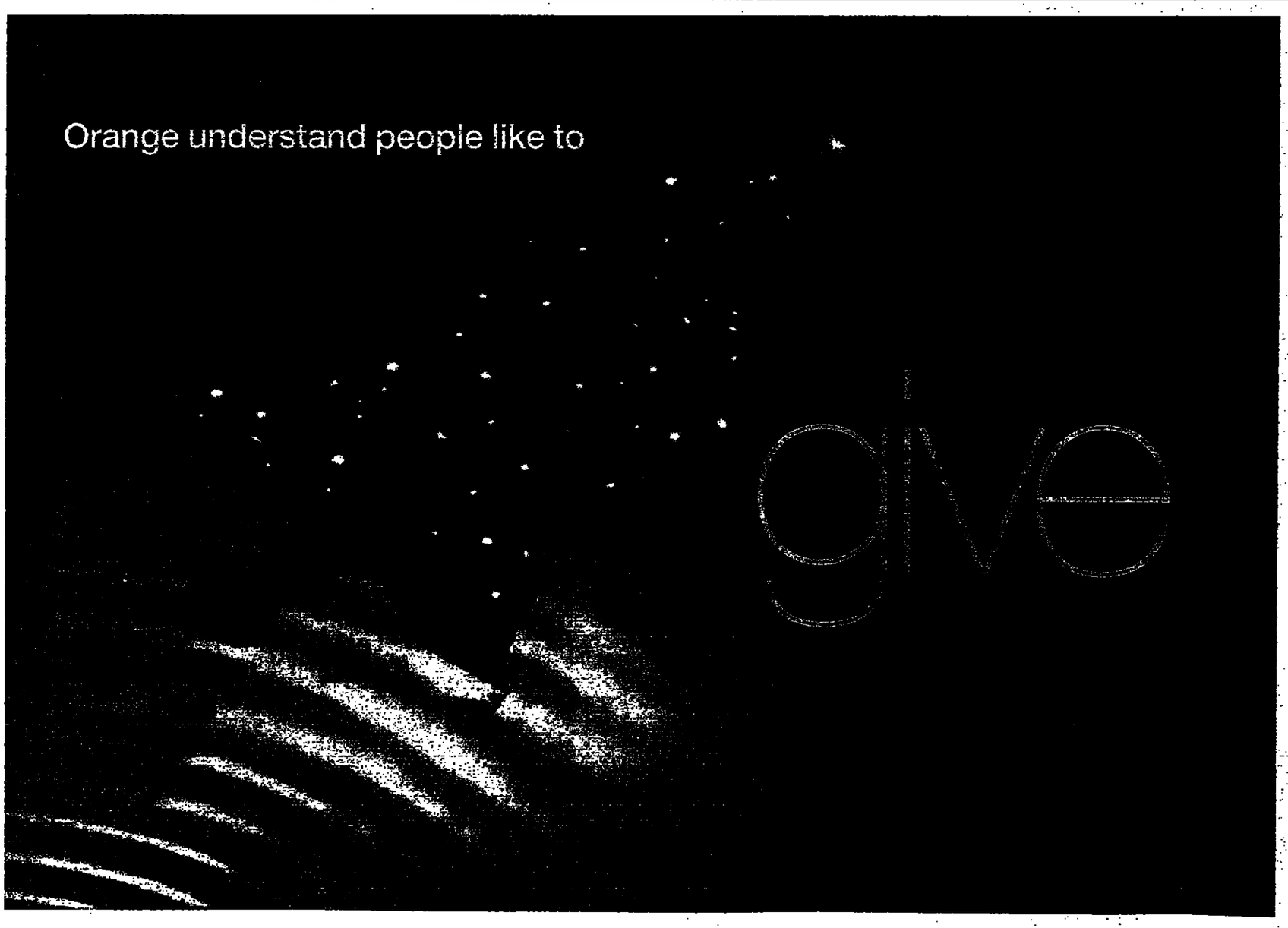
FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

INTERNET data companies have hurriedly signed up to voluntary curbs on distributing personal information in a bid to head off new privacy laws by the Clinton Administration.

The move by 14 companies comes as a new report on Internet fraud revealed that the FBI had found cases of illegal access to computer information or abuse of it had risen six-fold in the past five years. In September, a Maryland couple pleaded guilty to stealing the "identity" of hundreds of people by collecting their personal details off the Internet.

In the United States, three items of information — social security number, date of birth and mother's maiden name — are used in most everyday circumstances to establish a person's identity, allowing someone to get access to a bank account or credit rating, to set up telephone or electricity accounts and to apply for a driver's licence or credit cards.

The agreement to restrict access does not apply to information generally available in public records, such as court documents and marriage papers. All private information will still be available to law-enforcement agencies and some of it to law firms, banks and other businesses.



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Clinton offers talks on peace process

By Michael Binyon, Diplomatic Editor

PRESIDENT CLINTON is to kick-start the Middle East peace process by inviting the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to meet him in Washington next month.

Madeleine Albright announced this yesterday after meeting Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, in Paris and Yassir Arafat, President of the Palestine Authority, in London. She said Mr Clinton would see the two men separately.

Underlining her sense of urgency in pushing forward the faltering peace process, she said the two leaders had to understand that it was up to them to make the hard decisions. "We have been offering ideas and suggestions and the right environment, but the key to progress is for the leaders themselves to make decisions." In Paris, Mr Netanyahu showed Ms Albright maps of the areas from which he said Israeli troops would not withdraw for security reasons. She urged him to do what he could to focus on the "practical aspects" of further redeployment, but did not comment publicly on the Israeli Cabinet's failure to put forward an agreed plan for withdrawal, despite her earlier insistence that it should outline its plans before Christmas. She said that the peace process and the need for security co-operation required "100 per cent effort 24 hours a day 52 weeks of the year".

Yassir Arafat with Robin Cook in London yesterday

Mr Arafat had talks later with Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and was due to see Tony Blair in Downing Street yesterday evening. The Foreign Office said that Britain had promised to make the Middle East peace process the top security issue of its European Union presidency.

Britain assured Mr Arafat that it wanted to see "realistic" redeployment by the Israelis and deplored difficulties created by "unilateral gestures" on the ground — diplomatic code for Israel's continuing settlement construction. Ms Albright also welcomed the new moderate tone of statements by Iran, and said that Washington was "encouraged" by calls by President Khatami for a new dialogue with the United States.

☐ **Jerusalem:** A human rights group here has accused Yassir Arafat's administration of a cover-up over the deaths of 18 Arabs in his jails through torture or neglect (Ross Dunn writes).

Bassam Eid, director of the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group, said the only way to prevent more deaths was for Palestinians to begin public protests.

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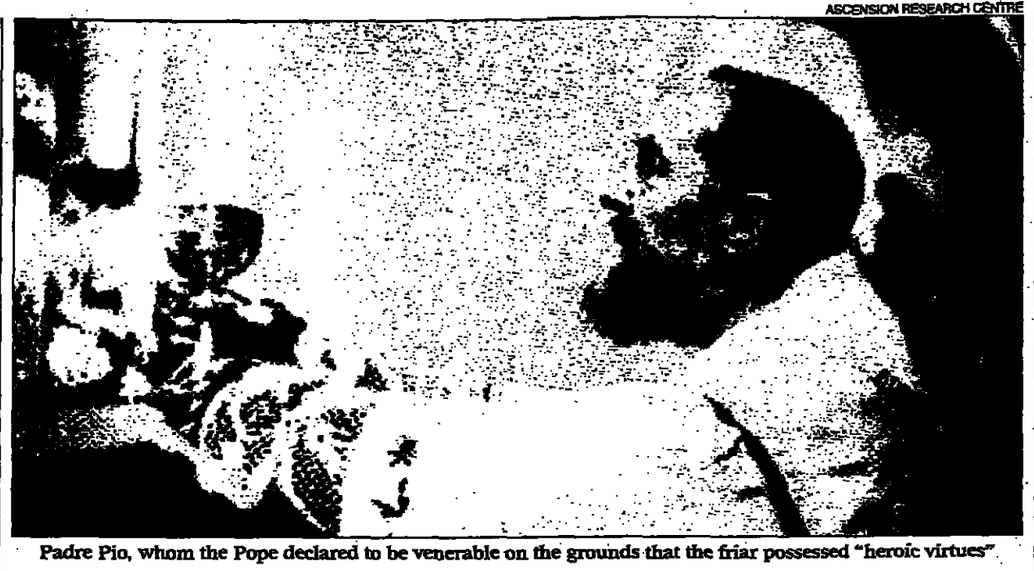

Padre Pio, whom the Pope declared to be venerable on the grounds that the friar possessed "heroic virtues"

Pope sets hermit who 'faked' stigmata on road to sainthood

Every year five million pilgrims visit the shrine of the saintly Capuchin friar with an alleged weakness for women and miraculous healing powers, writes **Richard Owen** in Rome

THE Pope yesterday put the friar and healer, Padre Pio, on the path to sainthood, even though detractors say the friar who died 30 years ago had some less than saintly attributes, including a "weakness for women".

Padre Pio is venerated by millions. But critics also claim he faked the stigmata, or marks of Christ's Crucifixion, which appeared on his hands and feet. The Popebrushed aside such doubts, declaring the friar to be "venerable", on the grounds that he possessed "heroic virtues".

In a three-stage process to sainthood, the title "venerable" is followed by beatification, and then by sanctification. When he was still Cardinal Karol Wojtyla of Poland, the Pope visited Padre Pio several times at his sanctuary at San Giovanni Rotondo, in the Italian south, which has become an Italian Lourdes since the monk's death.

According to Vatican sources, Padre Pio impressed the Pope with his holiness. The monk also predicted his election as pontiff, which duly occurred in 1978, ten years after Padre Pio's death.

Candidates for beatification are examined by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, a Vatican body. Beatification requires proof of a miracle, usually a cure for illness which medical science is unable to explain. The congregation has gathered numerous examples of alleged miracles wrought by Padre Pio for people who prayed to him, including the case of woman from Salerno with an incurable cyst who was healed after praying at Padre Pio's tomb and touching one of the bandages used to cover his stigmata.

A Capuchin monk from Pietrelcina, near Naples, Padre Pio was born Francesco Forgione, the son of a farm labourer. A consumptive child, he modelled himself on St Francis of Assisi, and was ordained at Benevento in 1910 at the age of 23, taking the name Brother Pio (Pius). Fellow monks testified that he lived for weeks at a time "on nothing but the sacraments". Some described him as "emotionally abnormal", with a "waxy face and unduly bright eyes", and noted that he prayed so fervently his tears "formed a pool on the floor".

He alarmed many in the Vatican, but acquired a popular following as a holy man, going into ecstasies during prolonged masses at his remote, mountainous sanctuary at San Giovanni Rotondo, on the wild and beautiful Gargano Promontory. He died there in 1968 at the age of 81, allegedly in an "odour of sanctity" — a scent of roses and violets — which followers still claim to sense when he is "in their presence".

His shrine is visited by five million pilgrims a year, and many regard him as a saint. The stigmata — bleeding palms and feet, and a wound in the side — appeared when he was 31. He wore mittens and dressings to cover the wounds, except during Mass, when he held his palms upwards to prevent blood from spilling on the altar cloth. The stigmata were eventually recognised as genuine by the Vatican under Pope Paul VI (1963-1978).

La Repubblica said there were suggestions the stigmata were self-inflicted. It also said Padre Pio was "unusally attached" to one of his many female disciples, Cleonice Morcaldi. The paper said letters from Padre Pio to Signorina Morcaldi had caused "problems" in the Vatican.

According to *L'Espresso* magazine, one Vatican official sent to report on Padre Pio's activities reported in Latin to the Pope of the time, John XXIII, that "*bis in hebdomade copulabat cum muliere*" — he copulates with women twice a week. The Vatican investigator, Monsignor Carlo Maccari, is also said to have reported that Padre Pio summoned women disciples to his hermit's hut by signalling with a red lantern. Vatican officials said these were "calumnies" invented by Padre Pio's enemies.

Padre Pio is also said to have possessed the quality of "ubiquity", or the ability to be in two places at once. During the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s a number of cardinals testified that Padre Pio had appeared before them even though he could prove he was asleep in San Giovanni Rotondo at the time. Padre Pio said this "bilocation" was due to an ability to "prolong the personality".

WORLD IN BRIEF

Democrat wins Seoul presidency

Seoul: A political fairy-tale came true in South Korea when Kim Dae Jung was elected President after more than 40 years in opposition as a pro-democracy campaigner (Nicol Degli Innocenti writes). Lee Hoi Chang, Korea's ruling party candidate, conceded defeat, saying: "I solemnly accept the will of the people. I did my best and I thank those who supported me."

State-owned KBS-TV said its unofficial count of 89 per cent of the ballots gave the centre-left candidate 40.3 per cent of the vote after a bitterly fought campaign overshadowed by the country's worst ever economic crisis. For the first time in Korean history, the ruling party candidate has not been elected.

Plea for starving children

Mexico City: Malnutrition kills 13 children under five years old every hour in Latin America and the Caribbean, a Unicef official said. Marta Mauraz, Unicef's regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean, said countries in the region had the resources to eradicate hunger by 2010 but lacked the political will. In 1970 half of all children in the region lacked proper nutrition, she said, while today there are six healthy children for every one lacking enough to eat. She attributed the progress to iodised salt, vitamin-fortified sugar and flour, and multivitamins. *(Reuters)*

Jerusalem's conqueror dies

Jerusalem: Uzi Narkiss, the retired General under whose command Israeli troops captured Arab East Jerusalem in the 1967 war, died aged 72 on Wednesday night of an unspecified illness, officials said yesterday. Narkiss began a 27-year military career when he joined the pre-state army aged 16. In 1965 he became chief of the central command that captured East Jerusalem from Jordan, enabling Israelis to visit the site of Temple Mount for the first time in 19 years. *(Reuters)*

Australia bans shark hunts

Hunting of great white sharks has been banned in Australia, making another area of ocean secure for the fish (Nick Nuttall writes). Great white sharks, right, have been under threat since the 1970s film *Jaws* demonised the creature and made it the object of sport. Hunting them has since been banned in South Africa, California, Namibia, the Maldives, Tasmania, the east coast of the United States and the Gulf of Mexico.

Rare animals in freezer

Kuala Lumpur: A man was fined £1,500 for keeping parts of protected wild animals in his freezer. Malaysian police found legs from a leopard and a bear, parts of heads of a mountain goat and a deer, nine wildcats, the bodies of eight clouded leopards, 39 civet cats, 11 flying foxes, a wild boar, a lynx mouse deer, monkey bones and part of a monitor lizard. *(AP)*

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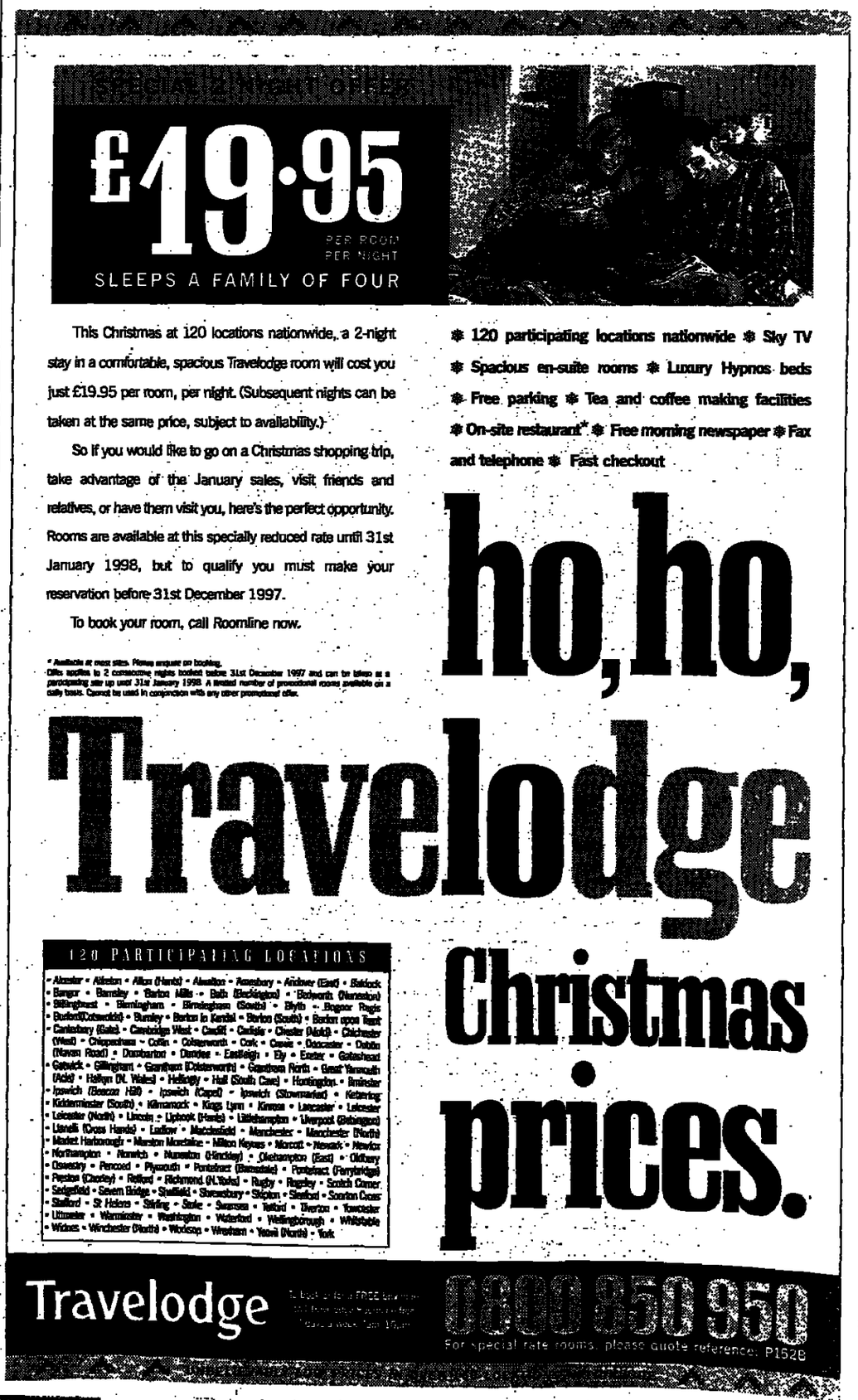

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How Europe sees Britain: Sieg for Blair or shut up

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

TONY BLAIR has promised to bring Europe closer to the people when Britain takes the presidency of the European Union next month, but the Government's message of "greater transparency" risks backfiring, thanks to the heavy-handed tactics of its media managers.

For six months, continental journalists have been both amused and irritated by the combative antics with which the Government's new Labour spokesmen try to limit information and keep the foreign media "on message". However a knock-about performance by the spin doctors at last week's Luxembourg summit is causing the continental media and EU officials to wonder about the Government's ability to handle the task of supplying neutral information during the presidency.

Some officials at the Council of Ministers in Brussels are also worried that the Government may be trying to gag EU spokesmen, although this is denied by the Foreign Office. "They don't seem to understand that we have to give more than just the British version of events here," said an EU official.

The chief culprit, in the eyes of continental journalists as well as British officials, is Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's pugnacious press spokesman. A former tabloid journalist, Mr Campbell treats his Euro-outings like forays into hostile territory and takes an apparent pride in his unfamiliarity with the subject. "You could say the rudeness didn't matter if the guy gave wonderful information, but he actually doesn't know anything," said a continental EU correspondent.

Next in line is Charlie Whelan, the spokesman for Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, a man who likes to dismiss EU issues as "Euro-bollocks" and tells journalists he would not deign to bring his minister "down here to talk to this lot". The other EU states leave their briefings from the closed council sessions to the ministers themselves. Mr Whelan earned Brussels fame in an incident last month in which he landed a punch on the *Financial Times* man in the Council.

The gladiatorial and flippant conduct of Messrs Campbell and Whelan may hail from the rough and tumble of the British lobby tradition but the manner does not translate into the more delicate context of the EU. "The bully-boy tactics don't travel well," noted a BBC correspondent. Questions from non-Britons, especially in poor English, are often dismissed with something approaching contempt. Spanish reporters rebelled after one exchange in which Mr Campbell, who holds a Cambridge language degree, said he did not understand their questions, in English, and refused to answer their inquiries. "He laughed at us. It was very surprising," said Carlos Segovia, correspondent for *El Mundo*.

Summing up the British spin doctors at the Luxembourg summit, Pierre Bocev, the Europe correspondent for *Le Figaro*, said: "If they wanted to be disliked, they could hardly do it in a better way. It's real arrogance."

After one bruising exchange with the British spokesman at Luxembourg, Christian Wernicke, correspondent for *Die Zeit*, said: "They've got used to owning their country. They've started to think they own Europe as well."

At the summit, Mr Campbell opened a briefing to several hundred media personnel by attacking British journalists who had "gone native", one of his favourite jibes. When the American *International Herald Tribune* published his remark the following day, Mr Campbell inquired about the offending reporter: "Who is this ****?"

"You could say Campbell's rudeness doesn't matter, but he actually doesn't know anything"

At one point in the summit Mr Campbell erroneously reported a victory for Mr Blair in the wrangling for a British seat at the Euro-X finance council when no accord had even been reached. Half an hour later, he retracted his remarks in telephone calls to British broadcasters, but to no one else. These attempts to manipulate EU information prompted a scathing article in *Die Presse* of Vienna this week, which described Mr Campbell as "the tall Briton with rude manners". It also noted that he would probably be flattered by the description. When it came to information, *Die Presse* said, the Government's policy was: "Sieg für Blair oder Shut Up" (Victory for Blair or shut up).

After Mr Blair was questioned about his spin doctors' Euro-outings in parliament last Monday, Downing Street said it could not help it "if foreign journalists were offended". The bad image-making is in direct conflict with Mr Blair's desire to win the respect of Europe and impose "British leadership" and is surprising given the Prime Minister's own good handling of the foreign media.

Mr Blair's political entourage is unperturbed with their image, in the knowledge that upsetting foreign journalists is unlikely to be deemed an offence at home. However it is no secret that the Foreign Office, which has enjoyed a good reputation for professionalism in EU business even during the years of conflict with Brussels, is worried about possible damage to the public perception of the British presidency.

London's performance will be judged above all by its handling of preparations for the single currency, a delicate task given Britain's history on the issue. Mr Brown will be chairing decisive sessions of Ecofin, the policy-making council. Some British officials are worried about the potential for trouble, given Mr Brown's own bumpy start in Ecofin and his spokesman's hostile approach to the job of explaining what went on inside the closed council.

Leading article, page 21

BOBBY YIP / REUTERS

A girl cries during a blood test to check for avian flu at her kindergarten in Hong Kong yesterday. There are nine confirmed cases.

Boy, 2, becomes latest victim of avian flu

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

A BOY aged two yesterday became the ninth confirmed victim of avian flu in Hong Kong, where two people have already died from the disease.

The World Health Organisation sought yesterday to calm international fears of a pandemic with a statement saying that such a danger "is not yet established".

Of the two dead, a small boy in Hong Kong's New Territories is the only person known to have directly contracted the virus, apparently from local chickens. But a Hong Kong health officer said he was unaware that 1,000 chickens had died in the local Cheung Sha Wan wholesale chicken market on December 12.

The market was reopened yesterday after a three-day cleansing operation at the request of traders, but sales, usually of more than 80,000 chickens a day, were down by 80 per cent, even though prices had been halved.

The public now refuses to eat chicken in restaurants; and Chinese chickens require certificates that they are virus-free. Reports on the gravity of the crisis vary. The Princess Margaret Hospital in Hong Kong attempted to calm fears here — during a period of even greater than usual air pollution — by noting that not all coughing indicates the flu. The avian virus, it said, is only transmitted at distances of up to 3ft.

But the Princess Margaret is the only hospital here with a 20-bed infectious disease ward, and Dr Andrew Yip, spokesman for the Hong Kong Public Doctors Association, has warned that the number of isolation beds may be inadequate if there is a sudden surge in cases.

Two cousins of a five-year-old girl ill with the avian virus may have caught it directly from her, but this is not yet certain. The girl attended a nursery school with a playground fouled by chicken feathers and flesh. Some other children in the nursery are reported ill with flu, but it is not known whether it is the virus H5N1, previously confined to birds.

☐ Taipei: Taiwan's Council of Agriculture yesterday told customs officers to crack down on the smuggling of chickens from mainland China. The country's Health Department warned tourists going to Hong Kong not to visit poultry markets or bird parks because of avian flu. *(AP)*

Warring burger giants put chips on front line

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA'S largest purveyors of fast food formally declared war on each other yesterday in the Battle of the Favourite Fry.

McDonald's, the world's biggest fast-food chain, has issued combat guidelines to its more than 12,000 restaurants in the US urging a counter-attack against an attempt by Burger King to gain superiority in the American chips market. In a memorandum entitled "Keep Your Eyes on Our Fries", Jack Greenberg, the chairman of McDonald's USA, ordered employees to staff their fry stations all day long, check the times and temperatures three times daily and remember, above all, to salt their chips properly. "As we prepare to go head-to-head we're operating from a huge strategic advantage because everyone knows that McDonald's has the best fries — bar none," said Mr Greenberg in Churchillian tones. "I don't have to tell you that this is our best opportunity to stop Burger King in its tracks and thwart its strategy of copying us to steal market share."

The counter-offensive by McDonald's reflects the company's growing anxiety over poor American results amid increasingly aggressive competition. Burger King Corp, a wholly owned subsidiary of Britain's Grand Metropolitan, first introduced Big King, a Big Mac clone that has proved extremely popular. McDonald's responded with an item identical to Burger King's Whopper.

The real war is about to begin. Burger King last week launched its new-look chips with a $70 million (£42.7 million) campaign, touting the first Friday in January as national "Free Fry-Day", during which Americans can sample the latest delicacy. "It looks like McDonald's is acknowledging that we are taking over," said Kim Miller, of Burger King. "But I think the the consumer is the real winner in the fast food war." Burger King's US market share is 19.2 per cent, with McDonald's on 41.9 per cent.

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Business warms to Mbeki as whites deplore 'racist' Mandela

Mandela: said whites are clinging to the past

FROM SAM KILEY IN MAFEKING

PRESIDENT MANDELA'S attack on whites for failing to grasp the benefits of a "non-racial democracy" and continuing to cling to apartheid-era privileges has exposed wide divisions in the white population.

White-dominated parties lambasted his criticisms of them as smacking of racism and intellectual dishonesty. Mr Mandela made his comments at the 50th conference of the African National Congress this week. But big business, which also came in for a drubbing in his valedictory address, reacted to the election of his successor, Thabo Mbeki, with enthusiasm, leading to a surge in prices on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

The exchange, defying predictions that Mr Mandela's suggestion that corporations should be subjected to institutionalised scrutiny of their activities and their social impact would create market jitters, rose by 111.1 points the day after his speech on Tuesday.

A spokesman for the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce said the ANC conference, which ends tomorrow, had made it clear that the ANC-dominated Government was going to stick to macroeconomic policies. "There is clearly no threat of inflationary tendencies or damaging labour legislation so we are perfectly happily with the status quo."

In his speech, Mr Mandela accused the National Party, the Democratic Party and the Freedom Front of seeking to preserve white privilege at the expense of "transformation". The 53-page speech was long on rhetoric but it did not point to legislation for greater affirmative action programmes or tax increases.

Business Day, South Africa's leading financial daily, hailed much of the speech. "The perception is that whites consider they have done their bit by 'allowing' majority rule in April 1994. They are seen as loath to take full responsibility for, and address, the sins of the past, and to have retreated into a social and economic laager," the newspaper commented yesterday.

"Many whites construe ANC attempts to broaden access to schooling and healthcare as a threat ... The lesson from Zimbabwe, where 1,503 mainly white-owned farms have been slated for seizure [by Robert Mugabe's Government], is that by isolating themselves, whites set themselves up as targets and scapegoats. They have a long-term interest in embracing the current changes and making them work," it said. But the speech was attacked by the white-led National Party, which introduced apartheid in 1948, for its "underlying racist tone". In a statement, it said: "The abrasive and divisive language, the very unconvincing and somewhat paranoiac conspiracy theories ... make depressing reading."

Equally damning was the Democratic Party. Tony Leon, its leader, said Mr Mandela's speech was "undoubtedly the low-water mark of his presidency". He said: "It was intellectually dishonest and unsophisticated in its analysis of the political and economic situation facing South Africa."

One issue continues to worry the party hierarchy. Although Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, who has been implicated in cases of abduction and murder, rejected a nomination for deputy president of the ANC, her name remains on the ballot for election to the National Executive Committee.

"If she comes anywhere in the top ten she will be a an embarrassment to the ANC. If she comes in the top five, she will be a major embarrassment and the ANC may be splashed by its own spittoon," David Welsh, Professor of Politics at Cape Town university, said.

Leading article, page 21

Sithole is freed on bail after bungled death plot

BY JAN RAATH IN HARARE AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

HOWARD BURDITT / REUTERS

Sithole after being sentenced in Harare yesterday. He said that security agents had fabricated the charges

THE frail and forgetful former Zimbabwean revolutionary, Ndabaningi Sithole, 77, was sentenced to two years in jail yesterday for a conspiracy to blow up President Mugabe that was so "amateurish" that it was "doomed to fail".

Judge Esmael Chatikobo said he wanted to avoid sending Sithole to jail, but Zimbabwean law on treason gave him no option. However, he immediately released him on bail to appeal against the conviction, and urged President Mugabe to grant him clemency. Sithole also received a suspended five-year sentence for two other counts of possessing arms and of promoting terrorism to overthrow an elected government.

Sithole, leader of the small oppostion Zanu (Ndonga) party, was convicted two weeks ago of trying to raise an army to overthrow the Zimbabwe Government, possession of weapons and plotting to assassinate Mr Mugabe. He was arrested after the collapse of the plot when an unarmed off-duty soldier spotted Sithole's chief would-be assassin alone at the side of the road with a bomb in his hand, and apprehended him.

"There never was a chance of the plan succeeding," said the judge. "It was so amateurish one cannot but wonder that it was meant to fail." He said that from the start, Sithole's group was infiltrated by a member of the Zimbabwean secret police.

Many of the men forcibly recruited into Chimwenje (Ndau vernacular for spark), the barely operational military wing of his party, absconded at the first opportunity and reported to the Zimbabwean authorities.

The naivety of the chief assassin was "mind-boggling," the judge said. The bomb was a claymore anti-personnel mine and there was no possibility of it even injuring Mr Mugabe as he swept past in the heavy presidential Mercedes-Benz limousine.

Sithole glowered at the judge when he heard himself described as "old, frail and looking tired and broken-down". Earlier, his personal physician, Dr Christopher Nutt, said Sithole suffered high blood pressure, angina, heart fibrillation and diabetes. He said his patient was on a range of drugs, but regularly forgot to take his medication and was incapable of following a diet low in fat and protein.

He gave Sithole up to eight years to live, but said he would probably die much sooner if he was sent to prison.

Sithole said after being sentenced that the fact that the court had failed to prove that he plotted to kill Mugabe and that no weapons were found at his home showed that the charges were fabricated by security agents.

"All that this amounts to is that the frightened Government had written out its transcript and had followed it very carefully," he said, alleging that the judge had no choice but to follow the plan.

Political refugees fear Kanu attacks before Kenya poll

FROM DAVID ORR IN MOMBASA

MORE than 80 people are still encamped in the grounds of the Cathedral of the Holy Ghost in Mombasa after their homes on the coast were burnt down in August. Their makeshift tents are dwarfed by the concrete and glass high-rise buildings of the city centre.

It is an unusual sight for Africa, where most refugee and displaced persons' camps are found on hillsides or strewn across open countryside.

"We have been told by the authorities to go back to Likoni," says Ruth Adhiambo, an up-country fish seller who settled at Likoni on the Kenyan coast with her husband and children four years ago. "But we're afraid because of the elections. We'd prefer to stay in town until they're over."

The August attacks, in which gangs shot and hacked to death at least 100 people, are believed to have been politically motivated. Now, with general elections due on December 29, many people like Mrs Adhiambo fear that violence could erupt again.

It seems the crimes of Mrs Adhiambo and the thousands of others who were made homeless in this region are twofold. First, they are outsiders who have managed to establish small but successful businesses on the coast. Second, they are from ethnic groups seen as being opposed to the ruling Kanu party of President Moi. "It's true, we're opposition supporters," says Mrs Adhiambo, 32, a Luo from western Kenya whose sympathies lie with the Luo-dominated National Democratic Party. "After they attacked us at night with machetes and petrol bombs, they left leaflets saying 'Give us back our land and leave here. You have seven days'."

In Kenya's first multiparty elections in 1992, Kanu swept the board in Coast province, except in Mombasa, where it secured only one constituency. It is up-country people like Mrs Adhiambo who are held responsible by Kanu hardliners for the Government's defeat in Likoni and two other constituencies. "There's no doubt it was local Kanu MPs who incited the violence here in August," says Father Ernest Mutua, vicar-general of the Catholic diocese of Mombasa.

The August raids were followed by a series of brutally repressive swoops by the security forces. In these operations, locals and up-country people suffered alike. Reports of beatings and rapes by the police circulate freely.

"There's no doubt Kanu will lose votes because of the abuses by the security forces," says Father Mutua, who is distributing leaflets exhorting his congregation not to resort to violence in the election run-up. "The police are behaving responsibly now but that was not the case in August."

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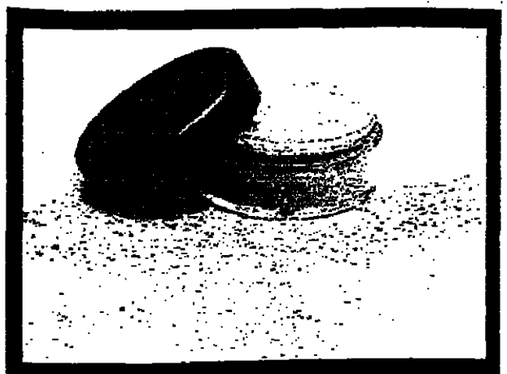

HOT TIP

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■ This versatile tiara can be worn as a crown, an ornate hairband or a choker. It also comes in multi-coloured stones, pearl or with lizards and fish woven into the metal frame.
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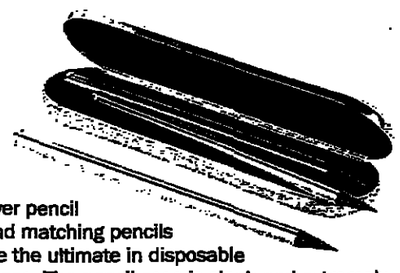

■ A silver pencil case and matching pencils must be the ultimate in disposable decadence. The pencil case is sleek and extremely heavy (best kept on the desk) and lined in black suede. While the silver pencils are beautiful to behold, they are not re-fillable.
Silver pencil case, £730 and silver pencils, £26 each by Clive Burr at Hennell of Bond Street, 12 New Bond Street W1. Tel: 0171-629 6888.

Compiled by DEBORAH BRETT

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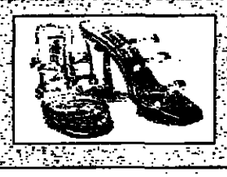
BayGen Radio, £69.99, Comet.

Three way favourite

An easy way to stand out with style and to save money is to buy one dress and transform it. Warehouse has designed a beautiful black glitter crochet dress - a steal at £55. At first glance it seems unremarkable, but with a little thought you can create at least five looks out of one. Wear it as a tunic over simple black stretch trousers, or invest in different coloured slips from Marks & Spencer. Worn over gold it looks opulent, a plum lace-trimmed satin slip creates a very sicilian look - very Dolce and Gabbana - and a black slip will create the classic little black dress. Black glitter crochet dress, £55 by Warehouse 19-21 Argyll Street W1. 0171 278 3491. Plum and gold lace-trim satin slip, £15 each from Marks & Spencer. Black stretch trousers, £39.99 by Morgan, 383 Oxford Street W1. 0171 499 4101. Black Gossard Ultraflex, £18.99 from leading department stores nationwide. Tel: 01525 881122.
Photographer: Ryan Sullivan, Stylist: Deborah Brett, Hair: Cira Mahony, Make-up: Jochen Fuchs, Model: Avignon.

■ Lulu Guinness beaded bag - small, exquisite and perfect to dress up any outfit. Part of an exclusive range for Debenhams (available at selected stores). £40.



■ Clear perspex mules appear almost nude on your feet, drawing attention up towards your dress. £45 by Sacha, 147 Oxford Street W1. Tel: 0171-434 1467.

■ Bronze embroidered shawls are the best way to turn a simple suit or dress into something opulent enough for evening. £300 by Georgina Von Etzdorf, 50 Burlington Arcade, W1. 0171-409 7789.

I'm the one in a mistletoe tiara

CUTTING EDGE
JANE SHILLING

Wit, style and panache — the pauper's secret to dressing well

I have never really been able to get all that worked up about what is supposed to be the worst fashion disaster that can ever befall a girl — finding yourself at a fearfully grand party to which some other woman has worn the exact same outfit.

This is probably just as well. If, like me, you are a stranger to the couturier's atelier, and dress yourself on an annual budget of about £500 from the lower reaches of the high street, then you get fairly hardened to running into your sartorial *doppelgänger* — some other sharp-eyed pauper who has also spotted the brilliant, V-necked, dip-dyed, Gucci knock-off for one tenth of the designer price — and even learn to treat the experience with a certain grace. "Oh, you've discovered it too," one cries. "*Isn't* it heavenly. And such a tremendous bargain... *I've bought one in* every colour..."

Meanwhile, of course, one is giving her the beady-eyed once-over, to see what else she has got on, and how she has pulled the look together.

The secret of dressing well is not where you get your clothes from, but what you do with them. Frankly, if you run into your husband's mistress or your lover's wife at the ball of the century and find that she is wearing the same frock, *that* isn't a disaster. The disaster is if she is wearing it with more wit, style and panache than you. Should you find yourself in such a delicate situation, your first thought (apart from a mental note to tell your *vendeuse* that henceforth you will be dressing elsewhere) must be to check out her accessories: what's that around her neck? Where are those earrings from? Is that a real emerald? And what does she have on her feet?

For an outfit, especially a party outfit, depends heavily on its accessories. Their job is to reveal the little flashes of your personality that can illuminate an entire look. They don't have to be terribly expensive, though it is worth making the odd serious investment.

For the price of a not especially nice dress, the glorious Georgina von Etzdorf scarf on this page would make a hop sack look good. (She does a version in black organza with white embroidery that would have much the same effect on a black plastic bin liner.)

A little beaded evening bag from Lulu Guinness, or a pair of teetering Manolo Blahnik mules will lend distinction to a very modest dress.

But the high street is full of treasures, too. Monsoon's velvet-trimmed angora cardigan, for example, stabbed with Fenwick's paste star hat pin; or the glass slippers from Sacha shown here. They are not exactly robust, and may well disappear, after a few outings, like Cinderella's fairy mice, but they are pretty, witty and, at £45, a bargain.

If I were feeling very flush, I would take myself off to Harvey Nichols and buy Cherry Chaw's silvery mistletoe tiara in the hope that someone might kiss me under it. But even on Scrooge's budget I can sparkle satisfactorily in square-cut fake aquamarine earrings and pendants from Wallis — plain, elegant and set in sterling silver, for less than £20.

So if, as I suspect, Santa fails yet again this year to slip into my stocking an adequate number of diamonds, at least I shall know how to make up for it: ingenuity, character and a fistful of well-chosen rhinestones.

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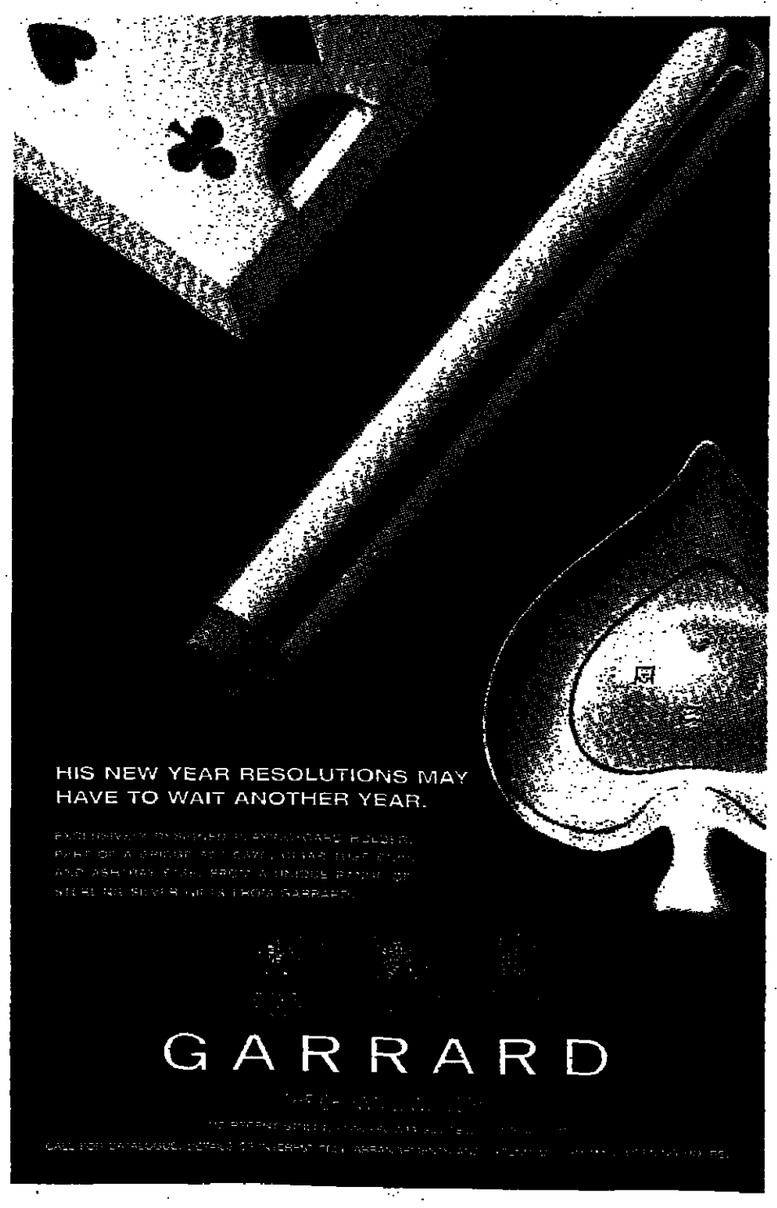

هكذا من الأصل

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The perfect Christmas man is clever, funny and likeable

Book your festive man now

A man is for Christmas, not for life, says **Rachel Morris.** And the more powerful and more personable he is, the better

It ought to be a law of nature, so generally is it true, that if ever a woman needed a man it is for those 48 hours from Christmas Eve to Boxing Day when she goes home to her family. Because it does not seem to matter how liberated and feminist a family is, the sight of an unmarried daughter will always get them worried. And a Worried Parent (as I now know, having had children myself) is a terrible thing.

On the other hand, bring home a powerful, personable young man (and for these purposes the more powerful the better — the head of the Sicilian Mafia would do very nicely) and you will find that your parents are eating out of your hand. *Families are very primitive about* these matters, and especially at Christmas when nature abhors a single woman — and so will your parents. As the advertisement for the RSPCA so very nearly said: "A man is for Christmas, not just for life."

My own transformation into a *Spinster took place alarmingly* early. One minute I was the Daughter-Who-Had-Gone-To-University-And-Was-Doing-Very-Nicely and the next minute (somewhere in my late twenties) they were shaking their heads over my single status.

It didn't help that my brothers were getting married and having children, a change of lifestyle that brought about a delightful im*provement in their position. Sud*denly they were given the biggest bedrooms, their opinions were taken seriously, cheques were being written discreetly on their behalf and their children were being passed from lap to lap with much murmuring and cooing.

I, meanwhile, was doing the *washing up and having to endure* heads shaken over my new haircut (of which I was very fond) and my *new boots (bought at great ex*pense). It's not easy being the family spinster, even if I was a fresh-faced 27-year-old.

It is not that my family are monsters. Really, quite the contrary. It is just that, feminists though they are, they do tend to fall into line when there is a man about.

And so, in my experience, what every woman needs this Christmas is a man to slay her family with his power, his personality and his appeal. I can still remember the relief with which I fell into the arms of my husband-to-be. It was December, and as soon as I decently could I broached the subject: "Can *you save me from Christmas?*"

All of which makes me wonder why no one has ever set up the Christmas Husband Agency. You can picture the scene. You pick him up on Christmas Eve at a prearranged time on your way to your parents' house in the country. He's clever, funny and likeable. He talks money with your father, does the washing-up with your mother, plays whist with your grandmother *(and allows her to beat him)* and computer games with your brother (and beats him hollow).

He declares firmly that he loves your haircut, that he chose your boots himself and you're doing very well in your new job, where you are extremely *popular. He drops* some broad hints about his power and position which soon has them simpering. There's no problem with conjugal rights of course, because, this being your parents' house, you have separate bedrooms. Your parents love him, although your brother, being more worldly (and still *smarting* from that computer game) will look at him in a puzzled way and ask you where you cloned *him.*

Finally, on Boxing Day, after a suitably late breakfast, he will tell your parents that you really have to go back to London, and, bundling you into the car, will drive you to the nearest motorway service station (it being the only place open) where he will listen patiently while you unload on to him 35 years of fury and outrage. And then, with just a peck on the cheek, he will get up and walk out of your life for ever.

Or not, perhaps. Because, of course, you may decide that a man should be for life, not just for Christmas. In which case all you need to do is smile sheepishly and he will instantly order two more coffees and suggest a film and dinner.

"Dream on," say my friends, "dream on." But it seems to me that if we can get a man on the moon (not to mention a divorce settlement for the Spencers) it should be possible for someone to create a Christmas Husband Agency.

'If Mrs Maita weren't so nice, I'd throttle her'

The brains behind Tamagotchi, the virtual cyberpet, is a schoolgirlish slip of a woman. **Moira Petty** interviews Aki Maita

MARTIN BEDDALL

Aki Maita played with traditional toys as a child, but says that when she has children she will "teach them the pleasures of Tamagotchi"

If I could have a one-to-one with anybody, it wouldn't be John Lennon or James Joyce — it would be whoever invented the blasted cyberpet, I shrieked recently. I must have been pulling on a wishbone, because here I was face to face with the brains behind the Tamagotchi, the original virtual pet.

Mrs Aki Maita, far from being some kind of high-tech Professor Branestawm, is a fragile, schoolgirlish slip of a thing. So it was hard to give her a piece of my mind, especially when my invective had to be channelled through an interpreter.

I tried to tell her that since July our household has been punctuated by beeps and electronic whines and that I have been forced into an unwanted acquaintance with the most intimate physical functions of my daughter's two cyberpets.

By night, her bedroom sounds like an intensive care ward. By day, she is the assiduous attendant of the little pests, pressing buttons to appease their hunger, mete out discipline or take them to the toilet, the result of which is delightfully illustrated on the liquid crystal screen as steaming triangular piles.

When Lily, 10, first demanded a virtual pet, I was nonplussed. After all, we have two nice, wet-nosed golden retrievers and six cats. Negotiations took place at Brent Cross shopping centre, North London. The computer-generated creatures exist on another dimension, she told me; she was the only child in the world without one. Then there was a dramatic shower of tears and I was the target of cruel-mother stares by other shoppers.

Hoping she would have tired of its infernal demands by the end of summer, I gave in. A few weeks later her father bought her a second. Now she is a single mother of two electronic babes — and I must say she is showing uncommon interest in the passage of the Social Services Bill and the welfare of single mums.

I, meanwhile, am the virtual grandmother, left to babysit when she has forgotten to smuggle them into school. When Lily was born, I had read the baby manuals and knew which end was which. The petulant squeaks of the electro-beasties was more puzzling. One jab of the button and I sent Roman, named after the lead singer of Boyzone, to a virtual cemetery.

Death, though, was not the drama I had expected. A click of the button, a shuffle through *Smash Hits* to find a *name, and a new pet was* hatched. Some children have reportedly been more traumatised. Did that worry Mrs Maita? "It is part of our duty to let children know that some day all creatures die," she replied gravely.

Mrs Maita is not, as has been reported, a housewife who invented the Tamagotchi to satisfy her children's wish for a pet. She has worked for *Bandai, the Japanese toy and* leisure company, for seven years, as part of the prosaically-titled Planning Section, Toy Entertainment Division, Department 1.

"I look at the market. What is the trend? What do people want?" says Mrs Maita. "It has been pet boom in Japan. Traditionally we have cats and dogs. But in pet boom we get alternative pets, fish, marmosets, ferrets.

"As the households are small and many people are allergic to pets, I thought we could adapt the idea as a toy. After pet boom we have another boom in portable goods. You open any handbag and you will find telephone, pager, GameBoy or ever smaller TV or radio."

There was a moral component, too. "I thought it would be great to teach children the pleasure of caring. The more you care for it, the better the *animal you see on the screen.*"

And what about the cross parents who will say that cyberpets disturb bedtime, meals, homework and have been banned by many schools? Well, said Mrs Maita, all Tamagotchis have a pause button.

By the end of the year, one million Tamagotchis will have been sold in the UK, 36 million worldwide. The makers claim it is the best-selling toy ever. *Bandai has had previous hits,* such as Power Rangers, but in the year to March 31, 1997, recorded losses of £40 million.

The company was on the point of merging with the games giant, Sega, until Mrs Maita had her brainwave. Launched in Japan in November 1996, the Tamagotchi craze has reversed Bandai's fortunes.

> A jab of the button and I sent Roman to a virtual cemetery

Did Mrs Maita not regret having gone solo with her idea, which would have made her a yen multimillionaire? "Yes, it was my idea," she said, with a bird-like flutter of her hands. "But I couldn't have invented it without my years of experience with the company." The Bandai boffin must have been well rewarded by her employers? "Our bonuses are paid in April and it was too early last April to recognise my contribution." Was she expecting a fat payday next April? A tinkle of laughter.

For every authentic Tamagotchi on sale, there are estimated to be four or five copycat cyberpets. Unlike the Japanese, the British are not brand loyal, says Mrs Maita with some disapproval.

Tamagotchi has become a generic term for the cult but copyright laws here are unable to deal with the problem in the way Bandai would like. The original was devised over a two-year period. In a Far Eastern factory, it can be taken apart and copied overnight.

Brands such as the controversial Kimiko, which features a foster child, have been wrongly linked to Tamagotchi. But children themselves are capable of subverting the idea. In Japan, boys have vied to kill off their pet as quickly as possible by overdoing the snack and discipline buttons.

In Hong Kong, a Triad virtual pet existed on a diet of cigarettes and alcohol, and was rewarded with knives, before the authorities there banned it. "With toys, there is always the risk that an innocent idea will be interfered with," says Mrs Maita sadly.

The original Tamagotchi is *ovoid, selling at around £9.99.* There is no such word in Japanese, but tamago means egg and tchi has a variety of meanings, including baby or loveable. A variety of creatures may appear, depending on the nature of the care given. Some look like something you would find at a school for tropical medicine. Others would have you reaching for the bug spray.

The Tamagotchi was initially aimed at teenagers and young female workers, "who manipulate communication in Japan and are very powerful", says Mrs Maita. Next month in the UK the DigiMon, short for Digital Monster, arrives, aimed at boys. By feeding it virtual protein, its owner will be rewarded by a cyberdog-of-war that can do battle with other DigiMons. Mrs Maita, somewhat unrealistically, emphasises the nurturing aspect. "Children are challenged to care for it so it grows into a strong boy."

In March, the more feminine Angel Tamagotchi, which arrives as a UFO and promises to look after its owner, goes on sale.

Mrs Maita works 12 hours a day at her job and plays golf in her spare time. She played with traditional toys as a child and admits she does not understand the technical side of her invention. When she has children she will "teach them the pleasures of Tamagotchi".

She says this so charmingly that I bite back the impulse to throttle her on behalf of beleaguered parents everywhere.

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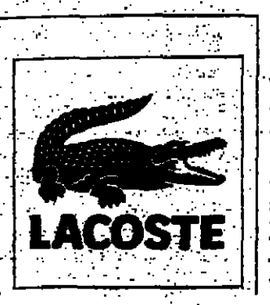

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Frank's modest proposal

Field aims to take the state out of welfare, says **John Lloyd**

Oh Tony (says the Parliamentary Labour Party), we gathered golden opinions from the people only six months ago which "would be worn in their newest gloss/ not cast aside so soon". Do not, dear leader, paint us as men and women who deprive the hard-pressed of any of the little they have. Let us seem to be carers and sharers for a little longer.

The plea falls on deaf ears. The Prime Minister has listened, sympathised (up to a point), respected (up to a point) the place of conscience and dissent. But, he told the PLP on Wednesday morning, "it is this party which built the welfare state and this Government that will save the welfare state". So stop whining and "explain what the Government is doing, and why".

Why is precisely the point. Tony Blair, off today on a reflective awayday at Chequers with his No 10 policy unit, still searches for a story to tell his party, his country and perhaps even himself. A story is the modern — or perhaps very old-fashioned — word for an ideology: an overarching rationale within which the main measures of government fit. Margaret Thatcher had the fusion of the market and liberty. Blair has pocketed that as a given, and wants to move beyond it. But what is available?

From the drear caves of the Department of Social Security comes a voice, at once self-assured and self-deprecating, anxious to be of assistance. It belongs to Mr Frank Field, the department's Minister of State and licensed thinker on the Big Idea — which is the restructuring of the welfare state.

Mr Field, wonk extraordinary of the pensions and social security worlds, member of the Church of England synod, lover of teasing flights of fancy and of intellectual explorations, has had a hard coming to Government. His relationship with Harriet Harman, his Secretary of State, is rancorous: she sees him as a burr under her saddle, he sees her as a (metaphorically only) ugly sister who will stop him going to the ball. Gordon Brown at the Treasury regards him with dour suspicion, seeing in his rethinking of welfare a No 10-inspired challenge to his own domination of the process. Even No 10 is getting restive at the long gestation period of his welfare reform.

What does Mr Field have going for him? He will have a Green Paper on welfare reform out early next year. This, he believes, should not be a grand plan, but the clear beginning of a process of incremental change in welfare provision which will, bit by bit, win the trust of the population and reshape their expectations of what they get from the State.

Welfare reform, Mr Field believes, will take many parliaments to achieve — but since he also believes, unlike the Prime Minister, that the creation of the welfare state lies centuries back in the development of the Poor Law rather than with the Labour Governments of 1945-51, he has a certain equanimity about a long timescale.

At the heart of his proposals will be something which a leader hungry for a moral narrative can take, and make his Government's. In a series of recent lectures, Mr Field has returned again and again to what he sees as a crippling feature of the post-Beveridge welfare state — that is, that it relied almost wholly on statism and chased out voluntarism.

In a talk to the Industrial Christian Fellowship last month, he argued that the working men and women of the 19th century, who banded together in unions and friendly societies to protect themselves against the misfortunes of life, in so doing "raised their characters on to a higher moral plane [in] ... noble drive to self-improvement".

"We must recognise," he said in the George Orwell lecture earlier this month, "the state to be an organisation which can make welfare available without providing it itself." Field is reaching back to the 19th century to reanimate the voluntarism which will be required to provide personal security in the 21st. The difference will be the continuation of a strong state acting as regulator and, to an extent, equaliser; the parallel will be that responsibility will reside with the individual, or with the collectives he and she creates and sustains.

Brown regards Field with dour suspicion

This is not socialism as it has come to be understood. But it is a narrative different from that of privatisation. It replaces that 1980s word with a new/old century one: co-operation.

New Labour has remained in touch with non-liberal opinion on social issues. The rhetoric on families is designed to appeal to it — even if, for the moment, it is little more than rhetoric.

The cuts on single-parent benefit have been supported by *The Sun* and *The Mirror* and *The Express*, not just because they are in varying degrees of thrall to the Government (as they are), but also because their readers are unlikely to feel too roused on behalf of unmarried mothers, who are seen as the authors of or collaborators in their own calamities. Welfare reform can gain and keep support — but only if the population is brought to feel some ownership of it.

It must become, again, part of popular morality. In fact, self-reliance has never ceased to be so: it is simply that now the state cannot afford to carry on without it. "Individuals," says Mr Field, "are capable of coexisting with the state, alongside rather than inside." Increasing that capacity for independence: pushing responsibility again down to the individual and family and voluntary society levels; toning up the withered muscles of civil society — these aims would support Mr Field's endeavours, and could do the Government's, if it were to focus on them. A theme for the policy awayday.

The author is associate editor of the New Statesman.

"If Tiny Tim be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population." Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit.
— A Christmas Carol (2)

None but the brave

Are Blair and Brown, like Thatcher and Howe, ready to face down their party?

Matthew Parris

We postulate too many watersheds in politics, but I feel another coming on. As the year closes it seems to me that Gordon Brown and Tony Blair really are approaching a watershed.

Watershed is a weary metaphor, its link to the original geographical reference already badly frayed. In topography a watershed is a line of separation between waters flowing to different rivers; a high point from which the fallen rain might flow equally this way or that but, having chosen which, can never return to the alternative course.

Geoffrey Howe's 1981 Budget deserved the metaphor. The Chancellor settled more than his Government's commitment to monetarism, important as that was. By choosing to punish further when there were already cries of pain, Howe gave earnest of the tough-mindedness which was to become a hallmark of Margaret Thatcher's administration. It was in that dreadful year, followed by the seeming disaster of the Falklands occupation, that Margaret Thatcher's sun burnt through the clouds to blaze eventually over two more election victories.

But it is important to recall how uncertain it all felt at the time. At the time the Tory "wets" believed themselves to be — and looked to many — like the coming thing. Forgetting how precarious her position seemed, we find it hard now to recapture the excitement caused when Julian Critchley wrote an anonymous article "by a Tory MP" in *The Observer* criticising Mrs Thatcher's leadership. To a big group of Tory MPs, those early clouds around her leadership appeared less like the morning mist than the fog closing in. What now seems tough-minded then looked hard-hearted. Her strong leadership, as we now see it, was dismissed as tinpot authoritarianism. Her wets, now derided as gnats that she swatted, stung like hornets.

In one of the rudest letters ever written politely, Samuel Johnson inveighs bitterly against a patron who "looks with unconcern on a Man struggling for Life in the water, and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help". There is, as poor Johnson discovered, a time-lag between the display of a quality and its recognition in the world. We call someone "brave" only after they have come to hold sway and need their courage less. There will have been a moment when they really were brave, but it will have occurred much earlier, before their spurs were won. We begin calling people "original" at about the point they are starting to be famous and predictable. The time of their originality will have been an uncertain time. Thatcher was brave and original before the world acknowledged it: rather less so after her party had fallen at her feet.

This is the time for Tony Blair and Gordon Brown to be brave and original. It is their watershed year. By December next year we shall know whether this Labour Prime Minister is a man to be knocked off course by his party, as both his immediate predecessors, James Callaghan and Harold Wilson, were. If Blair and Brown back down on welfare reform, and if Labour starts sacrificing good, unpopular ministers such as Geoffrey Robinson to the mob, then the waters of this administration will by then be flowing towards a river which can take Labour's fate in only one direction. But if Blair manages to hold the line all through next year, his leadership will have passed a gruelling test.

I am coming to believe that what Gerald Kaufman thinks today, others say tomorrow. It was at the last election but one that Mr Kaufman called the choice between Labour and the Tories a tug-of-war between fear and loathing; and it was at the last election that fear lost — overcome not, as Mr Blair boasts, by hope, but by loathing. On May 30 this year, writing in the *New Statesman*, Kaufman described the new Parliamentary Labour Party as "the happiest I have ever known". He went on to predict that it would not last. He heard little grumbles already, and ...

> ... as time goes by these mild and good-tempered gripes could turn into genuine dissatisfaction. After all, the two other Labour governments with big majorities ended in tears. The much overrated Clement Attlee so mishandled his 1945 majority of 144 that it was eliminated by 1951. Harold Wilson's 1966 majority of 97 was wiped out in 1970. Both times, dissatisfaction among Labour MPs played a significant part in the defeats.

Within seven months of his general election triumph, and on the issue of benefits to lone parents, Tony Blair has faced a rebellion of more than a hundred of his MPs — for that is the figure you reach if you add the 47 who voted against the Government to what appears to be a larger number who defied their whips and abstained. And that battle could prove a minor skirmish in comparison with what faces Blair and Brown should they go ahead with serious reforms to disability benefit.

On single parents, a number of Labour backbenchers were arm-twisted into giving their front bench the benefit of the doubt just this once, while issuing due warning, privately to the whips, that this kind of thing must not happen again. They will be harder to cajole, next time. There was colourful talk in the press about whips handing "the yellow card" to rebels: little mention was made of the yellow card which a big section of the Parliamentary Labour Party now believes it has handed to the whips. But although the language is coded, today's *New Statesman* article by Clive Soley, chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, is one of the longest yellow cards in Labour's history. Prime Minister and Chancellor have been put under notice that no shake-up of benefits which creates large numbers of losers among the disabled should be imposed.

But it must be. Mr Soley is just wrong. Although opposition to this reform is strengthening by the hour, the case for it is actually stronger than the case for cutting lone parents' benefits. Everybody knows — the Tories certainly know — that Frank Field is right. The last Government was hugely embarrassed by the rocketing cost of benefits for the disabled and would undoubtedly have proposed reform. Luckily for Mr Hague, his predecessors had not said so in print and — opposition being a cynical business — this frees his party to make trouble for the Government now.

And trouble they will make. So will the Liberal Democrats. There is a fundamental design fault in Mr Blair's much-touted philosophy of "detribalising" Westminster politics, which commentators have taken to mean bidding for Liberal Democrat support against his own left wing. On most of the issues where he might actually need support against his own left wing, the Liberal Democrats are going to be *with* his left wing. Many of Mr Blair's biggest and most bitter battles are likely to be about welfare and spending.

If he wants a detribalisation strategy of any use to him in the division lobbies (and indeed, in the press), then it is with the Conservatives that he needs to build bridges — as a rather dismayed *Guardian* leading article pointed out last week, noting the coalition that had won Harriet Harman her victory over single mothers. It is, oh dear, Mr Kaufman again who has pointed out that the most troublesome press criticism that Labour now faces comes from *The Guardian*. Tory press commentary is giving him a much fairer wind. This is "detribalisation", captain — but not as we know it.

I have suggested parallels between the crunch Margaret Thatcher faced in the first two years of her premiership and the crunch Tony Blair must now contemplate in his mastery of his party. I have said that her assignment was a tough one, and that she was brave.

Mr Blair's assignment is tougher, and he will need to be braver. That is because Margaret Thatcher's challenge was to be true to her party's core principles. Mr Blair's challenge is to betray his party's core principles.

Even during her worst political storms, Margaret Thatcher could put a sheet anchor down into the current of a century of Conservative thinking and belief, and be steadied by it. She was going with the grain. Tony Blair has no such luxury. He is all against the grain of his party's history and he knows it. His lifelines are to his new fair-weather friends in middle England and not to the old friends of his movement: the poor, the dispossessed, the working class, the academic left, Hampstead, the LSE and the trade unions. These he must betray, exchanging their love and constancy for the more fickle affections of the Sierra-owning classes.

Will his party let him do it? Is he determined to try? Or were the Tory boneheads, who a year ago were braying that the Left would resurface after the election, right after all? In which case (as Lord Melbourne remarked), "What all the wise men said would happen has not happened, and what all the damned fools said would happen has come to pass."

Philip Howard

■ Humbug, and this time my opinion won't change

The bell struck midnight. Scrooge groaned at this 154th annual resurrection of his Christmas carol, and reached for the Teasmade on his bedside table. But this uncharacteristic luxury contained only hot water, without the usual comforting smell of scalded teabags. And this year for a change there were two Ghosts of Christmas Yet to Come gliding towards the foot of his futon. They were trying, not entirely successfully, to wipe out their normally insincere smiles, and they were followed by a cameraman on a dolly and several production assistants with clipboards and headphones.

"Who — who are you?" quavered Scrooge, who, if truth be told, was getting fed up with his annual production as a Christmas morality tale. "And where is my tea? I simply cannot go through this annual pantomime as Mr Meanie without my bracer of Tetley's."

"We are the Rupert and Julie Show," groaned the two anchorpersons in something close to unison, while the PAs whispered into their mouthpieces and the sound engineers fenced with their booms and looked bored. "And have you not heard the midnight newsflash? A compound nucleus of EU scientists has suggested that the tannin in tea may give you TSE, or Tea Scaly End. The chances of it doing so are only 1.1 billion to one. You are 100,000 times more likely to be killed in a traffic accident, and 10,000 times more likely to die after being hit by a block of frozen excrement dropped from an airliner. But the minister has decided that he must follow the advice of his scientists and abide by Brussels sprouts. So tea on the leaf is banned from midnight, and you must ham it up this year without your early-morning stiffener."

"But why do you look so sombre and serious, dread anchorpersons?" cried Scrooge. "Of course I do not possess a set myself. But I have watched your show through the window of the television rental shop. And it seemed to me that its format was for you to look sunny however irritating or imbecile your allegedly celebrity guests and representative spokespersons."

Oh secret and self-contained man, as solitary as an oyster," intoned Rupert and Julie together, "Can you not tell from our solemn faces and the funereal background music that the nation has suffered another shocking celebrity tragedy? So we are going to cover it in our standard Celebrity Sadness Format or CSF. This means that we shall look solemn and repeat the sad news throughout the night, updating as we go and interspersing it briefly with the only three items of real news that we have. So over to you, Julian."

Newsreader: "The Seoul stock market has crashed and the South Korean economy has gone down the plughole. An earthquake has destroyed both Forth bridges and most of Edinburgh. And revolutionaries in the rebellious Russian province of Qzzzzzzqzstn, angry at the shortage of vowels, have launched nuclear missiles at Nato headquarters in Brussels and London. And now, back to you, Rupert and Julie."

"Thank you, Terry. And now to see how saddened the ordinary British public is by this sad news, over to our man in the street with a camera crew. How sad is the ordinary British public about this shocking celebrity tragedy, Joseph?"

"Thank you, Rupert. Thank you, Julie. As you can see, members of the public have spontaneously gathered in the street in front of our cameras to express their grief at this shocking celebrity tragedy. And here are a husband and wife who have come a long way to be present in person at this solemn event. How far have you come?"

Husband and wife together: "We have driven 750 miles. As soon as we saw the tragic celebrity logo on TV and heard the tragic celeb music, we got into our car and drove through the night. We live in Harlow. So most of that mileage was taken by getting lost on the elevated sections of the M1 and trying to find somewhere to park."

Reporter: "And how do you feel? Gutted and devastated?"

Husband and wife together: "Definitely."

Members of the crowd behind them wave at the camera. Reporter: "And now back to Rupert and Julie." Scrooge: "This must be another bad dream. Please let this festive celebrity go back to sleep for another year."

Bishop's tale

THE voice of reason is to be heard from beyond the grave. Shortly before his death, Lord Wyatt of Weeford wrote a play containing a stinging attack on liberal clergy. Now friends of the late polemicist, politician and *bon viveur* are keen to transport the work to the stage. *The Bishop's Wife* attacks hypocrisy, homosexuality and Radio 4's *Thought for the Day*, which is portrayed as a vehicle for pompous cant. Wyatt, an atheist, hoped to have the play performed next year. It is a fruity tale about a sanctimonious bishop who pontificates on *Thought for the Day* rather more often than he sings *alleluia* in his parish church. To relieve the tedium of marriage to a retired actress, he spends nights sloping off to his mistress, rising to preach family values over the airwaves. Friends are determined to see the play staged. "It would be a wonderful memorial party to Woodrow," says Norman Lamont. "He often talked about the script and obviously loved writing it. He adored the theatre — he was a friend of Noël Coward." His anticlericism developed late. "We went to a church in Tuscany and he seemed terribly moved. He loved the Gregorian chanting."

Friends: Lamont and Wyatt

● *BEFORE a jolly lunch at Christopher's yesterday, I bumped into our Health Secretary wheezing up the stairs. "I am well apart from a sore throat," said Frank Dobson. "Not chicken flu, I trust?" He responded with such assurance, I wondered if the ministry was doing all it might to stop the killer bug.*

Final Straw

LOLLIPOP women have been banned from wearing Father Christmas hats by Jack Straw. "It's against the law to wear Santa hats. If they don't wear standard uniform, they have no legal power to stop the traffic," thunders a tall stick at the Home Office. First victim is Mrs Pauline Allen from Essex: "It is ridiculous. I've been wearing one for ten years."

● *ANN Widdecombe has a new starring role. The Tory grandette is to play a judge in a Channel 4 series discussing such issues as abortion and drugs in front of a jury. Judge Dredd: watch out.*

Speechless

AS IF blessing Formula One with nine more seasons of tobacco-fuelled racing had not sullied the Government's name at the British Thoracic Society, Tessa Jowell has let them down again. On Tuesday the health minister was to address them on "How the Government can stop young people smoking". She never turned up. "We were all expecting her — some were rather excited," says a smokeless sort. "No reason was given." A sidekick is vaguely apologetic: "She cancelled due to diary pressures."

● *THAT orange fancier Lord Irvine of Lairg, refreshingly free of false modesty, has been telling friends about the Scotland Bill. "I wrote it. All of it," he expounded over a glass. This could be news to his old friend Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, whose wife Alison left him for Irvine more than 20 years ago. Dewar's office is puzzled. "Oh dear," muttered a source there. "It was a major team effort."*

Brushing up

WHILE her husband Alan grapples with the nature of authenticity in court, the real Jane Clark has stood up. She is returning to the painting career she abandoned to bring up her family and has completed a series of pictures of the First World War. One, *Letter from Home*, is displayed in an exhibition by MPs. The mournful piece depicts poppies, blood and a white feather. Her husband, author of *The Donkeys*, is urging her to paint more. "She is a beautiful artist," he says, "rather surrealist." She is taking his advice: "He would have loved his father to have seen them. I'd like to sell some to pay for my addiction to gardening and art shops." Her impressive work puts MPs to shame. Only four submitted daubings. "I allowed Mrs Clark to display because my colleages are too bone idle," says Michael Colvin, MP, the organiser. "She's the first spouse to be exhibited in the Commons." I hope it leads to a successful career.

Jane Clark's painting Letter from Home, and the artist herself

● *AT a City party, PR giants Brian Basham and David Burnside met with an attempted embrace that went wrong. As Basham averted his head, Burnside's nose collided with Basham's ear. Blood spurted from Burnside's nose. "I'd rather physical injury than a Belfast kiss," says Basham.*

JASPER GERARD

هكذا من الأصل

هكذا من الإصل

A TONGUE FOR EUROPE

Labour manners imperil the Blair message

Since May the new Labour Government has been a source of fascination, envy and hope for much of Europe. Continental voters have been as dazzled as the British by Labour's pace, style and promises. Tony Blair has high hopes of using Britain's European Union presidency to promote British values of openness and deregulation. The machine-minders of Downing Street have, therefore, been puzzled and irked by recent criticism in the European press that Mr Blair is "arrogant", that his claims to leadership in the European Union are overweening.

They ought not to be puzzled. The problem lies in themselves. What is abundantly clear to a growing number outside Downing Street is that the message is being sabotaged by the arrogance, ignorance and bad manners of the messengers. Britain, like America, has never treated foreign correspondents with much respect, believing that they deliver no votes and therefore have little claim on officials' time and attention. Under Labour, however, this attitude has been exacerbated by the manic insistence of attempting to keep all briefings, wheresoever they are aimed, "on message".

French, German and Italian newspapers cannot be so manipulated. They do not see policy through the eyes of British domestic interests, do not share the same assumptions and political short-hand and cannot therefore be "spun" to deliver government policy in the way its spokesmen would demand.

A correspondent for Austria's most respected newspaper has gone so far as to tell colleagues that Alistair Campbell, the Prime Minister's spokesman, behaves as though he was a member of a master race. He insists on "Victory for Tony Blair or shut up", she wrote. There may be some hyperbole here, even in respect of so confident a figure as Mr Campbell. But the attack should cause Mr Blair concern.

The Austrian sentiment finds echoes across the Continent. Journalists from France, Germany, Italy and Spain — all countries whose attitudes and votes Britain needs to court if it is to aspire to a successful presidency of the European Union — recall instances where they have been brushed aside, dismissed and collectively mocked. Charlie Whelan, Gordon Brown's press spokesman, is alleged to have described a group as "that lot" who purvey "Euro-crap" and "Euro-bollocks".

Continental newspapers are, indeed, somewhat uncritical of their political masters' great European project. The British tradition is more combative. Sir Bernard Ingham, Margaret Thatcher's ears and voice for more than a decade, set a certain standard of brusqueness: but he was never accused of ill manners on the current scale.

Explanations are no excuses. If a British briefer turns on a Swede and tells her to repeat her question when she can speak English, he alienates, at a stroke, all her readers from one of Britain's most steadfast supporters. When a Foreign Office diplomat, practised in French, turns his back on a journalist from Paris with the comment "I don't answer questions in French", he reinforces every cliché that Robin Cook is trying to dispel.

Image-making differs from country to country. While humour does not translate easily, rudeness is universally recognised. In two weeks' time, Britain will assume responsibility for briefing journalists from 15 different countries after every minister's meeting, every informal conclave and every international summit. If its official spokesmen continue to treat the media of Britain's partners with contempt, disparagement and linguistic ignorance, the Government will find that within weeks its stewardship will be derided, its achievements belittled and its goals mocked. Careless talk costs political lives.

MANDELA TO MBEKI

The ANC and white South Africans must adapt to each other

South Africa has this week witnessed an extraordinarily smooth transition. Nelson Mandela handed over the leadership of the African National Congress to Thabo Mbeki, a process that will almost certainly be repeated for the State Presidency after national elections in 16 months. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela's extravagant push for the post of deputy president disappeared. Even if her name had been put forward she would not have received that support required for nomination. Whether she is a spent force will be better measured through the contest for the National Executive Committee today.

This calm transfer of authority has been a real achievement for Mr Mandela. In a continent where rulers routinely continue until removed by coup or death, his decision to step down will set a potent precedent. Many white South Africans will feel, however, that the security of certainty offered by these events has been curtailed by Mr Mandela's address to the ANC activists. A man who has come to embody racial reconciliation chose to launch a set of attacks on the former ruling race. The tone of his contempt for opponents of the ANC did little to promote confidence in the prospects for pluralist democracy. As Tony Leon, leader of the free-market Democratic Party, rightly argued, the speech was the "low-water mark of his presidency". Mr Mandela's willingness to embrace his former wife will have struck many as equally inappropriate.

Mr Mandela's words, it is claimed, were inspired by Mr Mbeki. If true, an exceptionally cunning strategy has been executed. Mr Mbeki's own remarks upon his elevation to the ANC presidency were much more measured. He also suggested that many whites were oblivious to the conditions of the majority around them. But he conceded that the Government had not argued effectively that a non-racial society was in the interests of all races. Over the past three years Mr Mbeki has been a proponent of financial orthodoxy and a friend of business interests. It may be that he chose Mr Mandela to deliver a message to that constituency.

In more temperate language, there is a substantial case that white South Africans would be wise to consider. There are aspects of apartheid that oblige atonement. Too many corporate executives have complained to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission about the damage to their pockets and profits from white rule: not surprisingly they have infuriated moderates such as Mr Mbeki. South Africa's continued stability demands continued action on education and infrastructure to assist impoverished millions. This will, realistically, require a small sacrifice of sorts from the entrenched elite.

The challenge for Mr Mbeki is to promote that process without counter-productive initiatives. South Africa must preserve a First World economy while addressing its Third World issues. Reconciliation and reconstruction should operate in tandem. His most effective weapon in this quest would be more, not less, capitalism. The apartheid era spawned a corporatist economy with cartels in every sector. The limited liberalisation and privatisation that the ANC has encouraged so far has been more effective in attacking the control exercised by a small network of white families than a dozen speeches from Mrs Madikizela-Mandela. This may not be a popular formula this week but it should be the one that Mr Mbeki adheres to in office.

PRISONERS OF POLITICS

Justice has become a casualty of the peace process

Equality under the law is the cornerstone of civilization, arbitrary justice its dry rot. Men properly convicted of murder should serve the sentence that justice demands, not that which expediency may require.

Although justice may be appropriately tempered by mercy, in Northern Ireland it is being administered through the looking-glass. Men who plotted murder, with malice aforethought and heedless of the inevitable misery, will spend this Christmas with their families and in the knowledge that other colleagues are being released altogether. At the same time two young men who made a terrible mistake under great pressure while risking their own lives for others remain in jail. The IRA's bombers who dine at home this Christmas, and the Scots Guardsmen who languish in jail, are the undeserving beneficiaries and the unfortunate victims of the subversion of justice designed to propitiate the violent.

There is a high political defence for the indulgent treatment of Paul Kavanagh and Thomas Quigley, whose month-long bombing campaign claimed three lives and blighted many more. That defence can be used to justify the Christmas release of Patrick Magee, the Brighton bomber sentenced by a judge who branded him "a man of exceptional cruelty and inhumanity".

These men, and many other prisoners, have a special place in the republican movement and their support for the peace process is vital to the maintenance of the ceasefire. If they enjoy tangible benefits from the ceasefire, it is argued, they will lend their weight to the argument for its maintenance. But what sort of ceasefire is it that relies on the pampering of calculating killers to keep it in place?

The Christmas release of IRA terrorists is not the only evidence of a political intervention in what should be the autonomous realm of the courts. The continued incarceration of Jim Fisher and Mark Wright, two Scots Guardsmen who killed a suspected terrorist in 1992, can only be understood as an act of appeasement. They made a terrible mistake in shooting an innocent boy, but they acted under pressure in circumstances which their training led them to believe was an ambush. They have served more than five years for an offence similar to that of Lee Clegg, another soldier who killed in error and served three and a half years.

The only justification for their remaining in jail is a fear of inflaming republican feeling. The support for their release expressed by the Tatton MP, Martin Bell, who knows first hand about life under fire, should encourage the fair-minded to respond sympathetically to their plight. These young men were serving their country, made a mistake and paid the price. Keeping them in prison for fear of the republican mob is also a mistake. The price will always be a peace that depends on the goodwill of men motivated by malice.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Blair's X factor on single currency

From Mr Ian Taylor, MP for Esher and Walton (Conservative)

Sir, The euro is likely to be the single currency covering 80 per cent of the European single market. No wonder that the Prime Minister, in his article, "Neither a surrender, nor isolation" (December 15), stresses his determination to ensure that the powers of the Euro X committee are only to be informal. Even if he succeeds, the odds are that the committee will have a powerful influence. Your own leader, "Blair's X factor" (December 13), was wrong to say he should have dismissed the issue with a Gallic shrug.

So far, most commentators on EMU highlight the threats to the UK from membership. The events of the last few days underline that there are also political and economic costs in not joining. Staying out will be painful. The Prime Minister had better make up his mind rapidly where he stands. If he does not want to be marginalised, or to lose influence over matters affecting vital national interests, he must have the courage to provide a clearer timetable for the readiness of the UK to join EMU. This will entail setting out more precisely the policies to achieve the necessary convergence.

Yours faithfully,
IAN TAYLOR,
House of Commons.
December 15.

From Mr Selwyn Hodson Pressinger

Sir, It is doubtful Mr Blair's article will impress the "in" members of the Euro X club. Nonetheless he still deserves our support.

Many like myself who have worked in continental Europe in recent years appreciate the merits of a "common" currency. It was something the mark was already fast resembling, being Europe's common currency by reference. For this reason, many of us were initially enthusiastic about a "single" currency, which seemed a logical progression from the common currency.

However, the full implications of EMU and the difficulties arising from the EU's agreed timetable for the imposition of a single currency have given genuine cause for concern. As most British economists agree, this is not the time for us to join. Naturally the Euro X "in" members are unsympathetic to our position. After all, theirs are the economies most at risk. If exclusion from their meetings is a price Britain has to pay, so be it.

Yours faithfully,
SELWYN HODSON PRESSINGER,
4 Lyall Street, SW1X 8DW.

Tory leadership

From Sir Julian Critchley

Sir, The campaign launched by some Tory MPs in favour of one man, one vote (Omov) for the leadership of the Tory party (report and leading article, December 17) is a giant step in the wrong direction.

Any observer who has attended a Conservative Party conference in whatever capacity can only have been alarmed by the prejudices shown by the bulk of the party activists who attend such jamborees. With a few exceptions, the "floor" consists of right-wing Tories of the most unattractive kind: racists, floggers and hangers, and passionate "Eurosceptics".

I have been attending party conferences for thirty years. In each case the "battle" waged was between a relatively moderate platform and an extremist rank-and-file. Ask Lord Whitelaw, who, as Home Secretary, was obliged to defend good sense against a noisy and foolish opposition. Throw them a bone by all means, but make it a small one.

Yours etc,
JULIAN CRITCHLEY,
19 Broad Street,
Ludlow SY8 1NG.
December 17.

Oaths of allegiance

From Professor Keith Kyle

Sir, I was not able in the course of a short letter (December 4) to go into the detail of the many stages of the Bradlaugh case, to which I made allusion when addressing the position of the MPs from Belfast West and Mid-Ulster. As my friend Sir Ludovic Kennedy quite correctly points out (letter, December 13; see also letter, December 6), during the course of the controversy in 1880 and subsequently, Bradlaugh did several times express willingness to take the oath and in fact administered it to himself.

But the points that are relevant here are that the cause of the row was his wish in the first place to affirm rather than to take a (to him) meaningless oath, and the refusal of the House up to 1886 to allow him to take the oath on account of his having made his original stand.

Historical analogies are never exact. But this one raised, though it did not solve, the same issue that is raised in the cases of Messrs Adams and McGuinness: is a constituency entitled to be represented by the person it chooses or not? I think it is now generally acknowledged that the House did not enhance its reputation by its 19th-century response.

Yours faithfully,
KEITH KYLE
(Visiting Professor of History,
University of Ulster),
25 Oppidans Road, NW3 3AG.

Why charities merit their tax breaks

From the Chief Executive of the Charities Aid Foundation

Sir, Matthew Parris's logic ("Uncharitable thoughts", December 12) seems to me to be back to front. In essence he writes that the taxes we all pay have to be increased to pay for charity tax exemptions. And worse, some charities have become very successful, which makes the tax burden on you and me even greater and more outrageous.

Looking through the telescope from the right end we see this picture: people getting together to do good in the interest of society as a whole (not for themselves) may create legal entities. As these entities do not make profits or benefit, say, shareholders, the tax issue doesn't arise, indeed why should it? Surely this is highly desirable?

Incidentally, the aggregate of charitable activity has just reached 4 per cent of GDP and is not forecast to rise, which puts his article into perspective. This level of activity would plummet if we were to decide, as he suggests, to tax people trying to do good in this organised way.

He suggests the Wellcome Trust is a "hulk" and a tax drain. It is also a huge benefit to the nation. Would we really prefer not to have philanthropists?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL BROPHY,
Chief Executive,
Charities Aid Foundation,
Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4TA.
December 12.

From Mr Martin Eede

Sir, Matthew Parris's criticism of large charities gaining unfair tax advantages, coupled with an apparent assumption that smaller charities are bumbling amateurs, is a caricature of the voluntary sector.

Without charities who would fight the unpopular causes? Would Aids and HIV have been fought as successfully by government departments as by the Terrence Higgins Trust and the London Lighthouse, which were close to the communities most affected and could galvanise hundreds of volunteers into action? Would people with a mental illness have gained a voice and better services without the support of Sane and the National Schizophrenia Fellowship?

These organisations would appear among the so-called "hulking great charities" singled out for criticism, yet without their pioneering zeal the lot of people marginalised by society would be desperate.

Many of these organisations, too, provide community care of the highest standards; others, such as Crisis, go where governments fear to tread. They supplement government grants with their own fundraising and volunteering, thus ensuring that people's lives are lived with dignity and hope, as well as saving the Exchequer millions of pounds.

Is it not only fair that organisations harnessing all this voluntary effort should be supported by tax breaks from the Exchequer, not maligned by members of the "chattering classes"?

Yours charitably,
MARTIN EEDE
(Executive Director,
Association for Continence Advice;
Chief Executive, The Terrence
Higgins Trust, 1988-90),
Winchester House, Kennington Park,
Cranmer Road, The Oval, SW9 6EJ.
December 12.

From the Director of Charity Check

Sir, Peter Brown's statement ("Watch out, crooks about", December 1) that "Surprisingly, the law does not prevent any competent crook from registering or acquiring registered charities" brought an uncomfortable truth into the open.

The Charities Aid Foundation has said: "The current system of registration is the lowest common denominator. It doesn't guarantee a level of worthiness or standards of behaviour" (*Reader's Digest*, November 1995).

If some simple precautions were more widely taken to check that only genuine charities were allowed to make cash collections, hundreds of millions of pounds annually could be saved from going astray. Dubious off-street collections can be quickly banished if all those with discretion to allow collections make a point of first checking on the charity. Charity Check keeps a well used database.

We hope the Government will take an immediate decision to put things right. Official encouragement to take up genuine references could prevent most of the problem quickly, even before any legislation.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP COWEN,
Director, Charity Check,
18 North End Road, NW11 7PH.
December 12.

Medical aid

From the Director of Voluntary Service Overseas

Sir, Like many readers, I expect, I was moved by the plight of the South African burns victim, Dorah Moekana (article, "Who will save this child?", December 16). At any time of year, heartfelt pleas for help should be heeded, but is the long-term solution simply a financial one?

Dorah's situation is shared by many children around the world. Training people to become doctors and nurses takes a long time and is expensive. Many newly qualified doctors in developing countries seek work in private hospitals or in the West. The result is a drastic shortage of skills and experience where they are needed most — in family clinics and rural hospitals.

That is why VSO supplies skilled and qualified professionals — surgeons, doctors, nurses, midwives — to share their knowledge and experience with local people. This way local people learn the skills they need to care for all kind of illnesses. VSO receives hundreds of requests for health professionals a year and relies on suitably qualified people in the UK volunteering to help children like Dorah in South Africa and 58 other countries around the world.

I hope this Christmas that people moved by Dorah's story will respond by donating money — but also by thinking about volunteering their much-needed skills overseas. It is only by considering the longer-term, sustainable solution for countries like South Africa that Dorah's plight won't be repeated time and time again.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID GREEN,
Director, VSO,
317 Putney Bridge Road, SW15 2PN.
December 16.

Antidepressant drugs

From Mr Charles Medawar

Sir, Professor George Beaumont (letter, December 12) takes me to task for suggesting that there is a real risk of dependence with antidepressant drugs, comparable to that with benzodiazepine tranquillisers such as diazepam (Valium) or lorazepam (Ativan). His views might have carried more weight with me if his links with the pharmaceutical industry were not so close — and had he not mounted an equally vigorous defence of the anti-arthritic drug, benoxaprofen (Opren), shortly before it was withdrawn in 1982.

Professor Beaumont acknowledges withdrawal problems with antidepressants, but fails to explain why there have been so many more than reported with benzodiazepines; and he is certainly wrong to suggest that they are "invariably shortlived". For many users, that would prove true only if they were restarted on antidepressants. This would abort withdrawal effects, but only at the risk of compounding dependence problems in the longer term.

The Medicines Control Agency initially responded to my paper with kneejerk denials but has now undertaken to review the evidence I set out in the *International Journal of Risk & Safety in Medicine*. Professor Beaumont would be well advised to do the same.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES MEDAWAR
(Director),
Social Audit Ltd,
PO Box 111, London NW1 8XG.

Cold snipe

From Mr Peter Birnie

Sir, As an exile from the north of Scotland, I have always been amused by the reaction of the inhabitants of southern England to snow.

Yesterday we were regaled with reports on the news of deep snowfalls causing the closure of many schools in southwest England and I gave my normal inward guffaw.

Today you published a photograph of children playing in this "big snowfall" and my feelings were rewarded by the scene: snowballers playing in about 1in of the white stuff, while in the background cars drive along what appears to be a totally clear road.

The teachers had a nice day off, I hope.

Yours faithfully,
PETER BIRNIE,
8 Disraeli Crescent,
High Wycombe HP13 5EJ.
peter—birnie@pbmicro.demon.co.uk
December 18.

Christmas aisles

From Mr Michael Snook

Sir, While, as Mr K. Porteous Wood of the National Secular Society opines (letter, December 16), the majority in this multicultural society are not practising Christians, the vast majority are celebrating Christmas, the festival commemorating the birth of Christ.

Asda, their investors and their employees should be congratulated for allowing the reminders of the very central reason for this happy season to be broadcast to their customers. Perhaps they will allow Mr Wood the same facility; I look forward to hearing his enlightening message when I am shopping next Secularmas.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL SNOOK,
190 Twentywell Lane,
Sheffield S17 4QF.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Shylock as drawn by Shakespeare

From Mr Martin D. Yaffe

Sir, Heather Neill ("Shylock's pounded flesh", Arts, December 9) rightly notes that Shakespeare's alleged portrayal of Shylock "as a representative Jew" clashes with our judgment of his humanity and sophistication as "beyond any expectations we may have of his contemporaries".

I doubt, however, whether Shakespeare thought of the character as simply a representative of his religion. Shortly after sealing his bond with Antonio, for instance, Shylock deliberately decides to break with Jewish dietary law to attend an ensuing business dinner. Had he not done so, he would not have given his daughter opportunity to elope that evening; nor, subsequently, could he have included her despoiling him of his savings and marrying a Christian in the score he meant to settle with Antonio.

Later, in court, the two highest political authorities in the play, the Duke and Portia, attribute Shylock's hard-heartedness to his failure to live up to Jewish law rather than to that law as such. The Duke exhorts him, unsuccessfully, to exercise mercy in accordance with his Jewish upbringing; and Portia reminds him, in effect, that the Lord's Prayer is a Jewish as well as a Christian prayer.

I agree with Heather Neill that Shylock "was invented at a time when it would not have occurred to audiences to feel any discomfort at the portrayal of a villain with certain stereotyped racial characteristics". *The Merchant of Venice* works to increase their discomfort; and its subtle way of pinpointing the arch-Christian Antonio as Shylock's *agent provocateur* is further testimony to Shakespeare's humanity and sophistication.

Yours etc,
MARTIN D. YAFFE
(Author, *Shylock and the Jewish Question*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997),
University of North Texas,
PO Box 310920,
Denton, TX 76203-0920.
aurora@gte.net
December 9.

South Bank scheme

From Lord Hutchinson of Lullington, QC

Sir, In his article, "Will the glass wave hit a concrete wall?" (Arts, Architecture, December 10), Marcus Binney asks whether £108 million should now be spent on Richard Rogers's great glass roof over the South Bank.

Binney describes it as "potentially the most beautiful London landmark of the Millennium". He also reports research showing "that 95 per cent of people say that the South Bank environment is appalling and puts them off coming".

What is appalling, I suggest, especially for the elderly, is getting there. In winter the long, dirty, wet and often icy walk from Waterloo Station, or across Hungerford or Waterloo bridges, or from the inadequate car parks, are each a nightmare.

What people need now is a simple, covered, clean, straight and level walk from Waterloo Station, which might, surely, today have a moving airport-type floor. Then we could relax and enjoy the Richard Rogers experience.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY HUTCHINSON,
House of Lords.
December 10.

Commons complaints

From Mrs Sandra Lewin

Sir, When I was about 8 or 9 years old, I discovered that by effecting an insouciance I was far from feeling, horrible little boys in the playground did not bother to put spiders down my back, but concentrated their attentions on the yelling and crying girls as this provided them with much more fun.

I wonder if the new influx of lady Labour MPs ("Stop moaning, Tories tell Labour sisters", report, December 13) should try this tactic in the hope that the horrible little boys in the House of Commons get bored and find some other means of satisfying their playground needs.

Yours sincerely,
S. LEWIN,
3 Bourne End Road,
Northwood, Middlesex HA6 3BP.
December 15.

Web of misery

From Mr David Leeson

Sir, You report today on the problems being faced by the ladybird spider, including the fact that the male of the species, having failed to mate, dies. I know exactly how he feels, and 40 years ago I was quite sure that I was going to die on several occasions, having failed to mate.

But even worse, if he succeeds, the female is then consumed by her ungrateful offspring. You say the future looked bleak for these poor creatures until the intervention of scientists and their spider "dating agency". I would say the present looks even bleaker.

In dying out I suspect they know exactly what they are doing. Scientists should leave them in peace.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID LEESON,
2/22 Wake Green Road,
Moseley, Birmingham B13 9PA.
December 16.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 18: The Baroness Gould of Potternewton was received by The Queen upon relinquishing her appointment as a Baroness in Waiting to Her Majesty and the Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale was received by The Queen upon her appointment as a Baroness in Waiting to Her Majesty.

Her Excellency Mrs Roza Otunbayeva was received in audience by The Queen and presented her Letters of Credence as Ambassador from the Republic of Kyrgystan to the Court of St James's.

Mr J.R. Young (Deputy Under-Secretary and Chief Clerk, Foreign and Commonwealth Office) was present.

Sir Robin Butler was received by Her Majesty upon relinquishing his appointment as Secretary to the Cabinet.

Major General Angus Ramsay was received by The Queen upon his appointment as Commander British Forces Cyprus and Administrator of the Sovereign Base Area.

Major Albert Smith was received by Her Majesty and took leave upon his retirement from service in the Royal Household as Superintendent of the Royal Mews.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 19: The Duke of York this evening attended the Year of the Seafarer Finale Concert in aid of King George's Fund for Sailors at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London SE1.

CLARENCE HOUSE
December 19: Major General Sir Simon Cooper today had the honour of being received by Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, Honorary Colonel, The Royal Yeomanry, upon relinquishing his appointment as Colonel of the Regiment.

General Sir Jeremy Blacker also had the honour of being received by Her Majesty upon assuming his appointment as Colonel of The Royal Yeomanry.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
December 19: The Prince of Wales, Patron, this evening held a Reception for members of the Glamorgan County Cricket Club.

KENSINGTON PALACE
December 19: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon was present this evening at a performance of *Cinderella* by the Adventures in Motion Pictures Company, in aid of the Dancers' Trust, at the Piccadilly Theatre, London W1.

The Queen has been pleased to make the following appointment to Her Majesty's Household:

The Earl of Airlie KT to be a Permanent Lord in Waiting.

Today's royal engagements

The Queen will visit The Queen's Royal Lancers at Belvoir Castle, Grantham, Lincolnshire at 11.35 to mark her 50th year as Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment.

The Prince of Wales, Patron, Bristol Cancer Help Centre, will visit the centre at Grove House, Cornwallis Grove, Clifton, at noon.

Birthdays today

Sir Antony Buck, QC, former MP, 69; Sir Ross Buckland, chief executive, Unigate, 55; Mr Upamanyu Chatterjee, novelist, 38; Mr Timothy Eggar, former MP, 46; Brigadier L.J. Harris, cartographer, 87; Sir Brian Hill, former president, Higgs and Hill, 65; Mr Steven Isserlis, cellist, 39; Mr Syd Little, comedian, 55.

Mr Tim Parks, novelist, 43; the Marquess of Queensberry, 68; Mr David Rowe-Beddoe, chairman, Welsh Development Agency, 60; Sir David Rowe-Ham, former Lord Mayor of London, 62; Professor Christopher Smout, Historiographer Royal in Scotland, 64; Lord Weir, 66.

Luncheons

Mr Frank Law
Mr Frank Law gave a luncheon at Boodle's yesterday. The guests were:
The Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy, Lord Baker of Dorking, CH, Mr Robin Blandford, Lord Chalfont, Sir Norman Fowler, MP, Mr Michael Frye, Mr John Gordon, Mr David Gordon Shute, Mr Alain Grisar, Mr Peter Ham, Sir William Heseltine, Lord Howell of Guildford, Mr Martin Lane, Mr Christopher Law, Mr Peter Law, Mr George von Mallinckrodt, KBE, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, Mr Robin Mountfield, Sir Peter Petrie, Sir Daniel Pettit, Sir John Richards, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, QC, Sir Nicholas Scott, Mr Dominic Shorthouse, Sir Crispin Tickell, Sir Peter Thompson and Baron Vaes.

National Sporting Club
Mr Angus Fraser was the guest of honour at a luncheon of the National Sporting Club held yesterday at the Café Royal. Mr David Willis, club director, presided and Mr Keith O'Keefe was the guest speaker.

Glass Sellers

The following have been installed officers of the Glass Sellers' Company for the ensuing year:
Master, Mr John Hitch; Prime Warden, Mr Christopher Tizard, Renter Warden, the Right Rev John Waine, KCVO.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: William Edward Parry, Arctic explorer, Bath, 1790; Sir Ralph Richardson, actor, Cheltenham, 1902; Leonid Brezhnev, President of the Soviet Union 1977-82, Dneprodzerzhinsk, Ukraine, 1906; Edith Piaf, singer, Paris, 1915; Eamonn Andrews, broadcaster, Dublin, 1922.

DEATHS: Matteo Boiardo, poet, Reggio nell'Emilia, 1494; Vitus Bering, navigator, Bering Island, 1741; David Hartley the younger, statesman and inventor, Bath, 1813; Benjamin Smith Barton, naturalist, Philadelphia, 1815; Emily Brontë, poet and novelist, Haworth, Yorkshire, 1848; Joseph Mallord William Turner, painter, London, 1851; Sir Paul Vinogradoff, historian, Paris, 1925; Louis Untermeyer, writer, 1977.

Henry II became King of England, 1154.

Britain and China signed an agreement for the return in 1997 of Hong Kong to China, 1984.

GILL ALLEN

David King, 6, centre, and his brother Thomas, 4, from Crystal Palace, playing with the figures in a Christmas crib created by the North London sculptor Alec Worster for Southwark Cathedral, South London. In 1995 he completed a series of figures of homeless people which was shown in the cathedral last December; these led to him being commissioned to create the crib

University news

University of Ulster

Research Grants
Professor M Carey, £131,458 from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (A more flexible framework for modelling time-varying traffic on road networks).
Dr J McCloskey, £25,499 from the Natural Environment Research Council (High resolution search for repeating earthquakes on the Eliki Fault, Gulf of Corinth)
Dr B H R T Rippey and Professor C Gibson from The Queen's University of Belfast, £24,272 from NERC (Asses the importance of rapid sedimentation for the removal of trace metal contaminants in lakes)

Research Contracts
Professor B Norton, Mr D J Lavery, Dr S N G Lo, Mr P P G Donnelly, £300,720 from CEC - THERMIE (Learning Resource Centre, Jordanstown).
Dr J A McLaughlin, Dr P D Maguire, Professor J McC Anderson, £266,584 from IRTU - START programme (Plasma enhanced chemical vapour deposition)
Dr G McMullan and Dr W F Smyth, £127,060 from CEC - ERDF INTERREG (Development of analytical methods for monitoring of trace concentrations of organic pollutants in the environment)
Mr D A Wilson and Dr D Morrow £97,500 from ERDF, £32,500 from CCRU (Experiences of equity, diversity and interdependence: translating community relations theory into practice)
Professor K O'Neill, £82,010 from DTI & Fresh Food Kitchen (Teaching Company Programme between the University of Ulster and Fresh Food Kitchen)
Mrs T M Scott, Mr A Hutton, Mr A McCaughey, £82,010 from DTI & Singularity Ltd (Teaching Company Programme between the University of Ulster and Singularity Ltd)
Dr C E Carter and Dr D Griffiths, £70,595 from CEC - ERDF INTERREG (Environmental impact of the relocation of outfalls)
Dr A P McHale, Professor R Marchant, Dr U P Singh, Dr G McMullan, £68,970 from Industrial Research and Technology Unit - START programme (Bioremediation of contaminated effluent)
Dr A Cooper and Mr G Nevin, £59,430 from Du Pont (UK) Ltd (Investigation into lime spoil rehabilitation and lagoon habitat remediation at Maydown)
Professor C G Knox, Dr M R Murray, Dr J E Hughes, £51,757 from the Northern Ireland Partnership Board (Qualitative evaluation of district partnerships)
Professor I Rowland, £45,282 from CEC - FAIR (New methodologies for studying diet and gut maturation in early life)
Professor D Carson and Mr A O'Driscoll (Dublin Institute of Technology), £34,522 from CEC - TMR (Understanding changing approaches to organising and managing marketing activities in the larger SME)
Professor B Norton, £29,970 from Northern Ireland Housing Executive (Optimal deployment of innovative energy efficient building envelope technologies to existing and new dwelling stocks in Northern Ireland)
Dr D Bloomfield and Professor J A Dunn, £28,471 from United States Institute for Peace (Official mediation in Northern Ireland: case studies and strategies for intervention)

Charities
Professor P R Flatt, £32,400 from the British Diabetic Association (Engineering immortal human insulin-secreting cells for studies of pancreatic B-cell function and potential gene therapy in IDDM)

Chairs
Professor Colin Boreham, sport and exercise science; Professor Richard Harrison strategy and organisational development; Professor Adrian Palmer, tourism.

Appointments
Ms Patricia Maxwell (lecturer in law) has been appointed to the Board of Labour Relations Agency (Northern Ireland); Professor Adrian Palmer has been elected to a fellowship of the Chartered Institute of Marketing.

Church news

Appointments
The Rev Brian Duckworth, Priest-in-Charge, Sutton in Ashfield St Michael and All Angels (Southwell): to be Team Vicar, Hucknall Torkard (same diocese).
The Rev Gordon Fyles, Curate, Wimbledon Emmanuel Ridgway Proprietary Chapel (Southwark): Rector, Crinken St James, Dublin (Church of Ireland).
The Rev Mark Kinder, Assistant Curate, Pheasey (Lichfield): to be Team Vicar, Tettenhall Regis, with special responsibility for Pendeford (same diocese).
The Rev Martin Leaton, permission to officiate, Moretonhampstead United Benefice (Exeter): Priest-in-Charge, Rampton w Laneham, Treswell, Cottam and Stokeham (Southwell).
The Rev Richard Press, Priest-in-Charge, Rowde and Poulshot (Salisbury): to be also Chaplain, Devizes Community Hospital (same diocese).
The Rev David Springthorpe, Vicar, Barnehurst St Martin (Rochester): to be also Rural Dean of Erith (same diocese).
The Rev Martin Thorpe, Curate, Ravenhead St John the Evangelist (Liverpool): to be Team Vicar, Sutton St Michael and All Angels (same diocese).
The Rev Dr Richard Turnbull, Assistant Curate, Portswood Christ Church (Winchester): to be Vicar, Chineham (same diocese).
The Rev Benjamin Wallis, Assistant Curate, Battersea Christ Church and St Stephen (Southwark): to be Assistant Curate, Wood Green Team Ministry (London).

Retirements and resignations
The Rev Raymond Martin, Priest-in-Charge, Oldbury-on-Severn, and Falfield w Rockhampton (Gloucester) to retire February 15.
The Rev David Sharpe, Vicar, Mill Hill St Michael and All Angels (London) to resign February 28.

Legal Practice Course

The following London Guildhall University students have successfully completed the Legal Practice Course:

Full-time
Simmonds, Christopher Albert, distinction; Weir, M Diana, distinction; Al Naimi, Anne Cecilia Mary, commendation; Canning, James John, commendation; Clare, Elizabeth Mary, commendation; Dillon, James Jerome, commendation; Dodd, Fiona Margaret, commendation; Fraser, Ian George, commendation; Gatcum, Darren Spencer, commendation; Grant, Cyrus Henry, commendation; Griffiths, Fabrice Mark Philip, commendation; Hollingsworth, Dominic, commendation; Izzo, Julian Stefan, commendation; Leigh, Nicola Mary, commendation; Lisle, Jonathan William, commendation; Morgan, Helen, commendation; Moriarty, Michelle Christine, commendation; Pitts, Sonia Louise, commendation; Russell, Tamara, commendation; Shafizadeh, Cyrus, commendation; Watts, James Bradley, commendation.

Adojutelegan, Nathaniel Olu, pass; Beckley, Renike Donna Lenshina Navo, pass; Bellinfantie, Owen Laurel, pass; Bryan, Rosalie Alexandria, pass; Collier, Inez Lorraine, pass; Culshaw, Sarah, pass; Dheraj, Harjeet Singh, pass; Dougan, Theodore Emmanuel, pass; Douglas, Deirdre Alethea, pass; Emmanuel, Shobana Naomi, pass; Gallen, John Peter, pass; Gomez, Rita, pass; Hughes, Penelope Clare, pass; Hussain, Asmat, pass; Igbinovia, Iriuwa, pass; Jules, Natasha Amanda, pass; Ko, Wing Yin Alison, pass; Kozary Scott, Jacqueline Elizabeth, pass; McKoy, Vivienne Sylvia, pass; Odutola, Adebanjo Bolaji, pass; Okafor, Jenny Gladys Chikaodili, pass; Parks, Stephen Brian; pass; Patel, Samir Chandrakant, pass; Peermohamed, Faiyazali Haiderali, pass; Sebire, Adrian David William, pass; Smith, Jean Anne Rushton, pass; Vickery, Julian Robert, pass; Vittadini, Anthony Ian Fraser, pass; Walker, Richard Kenneth, pass; Waraich, Kiren Bir, pass; Zeki, Hakan, pass.

Part-time
Chesher, Martin John; distinction; Dye, Kirstie, distinction; Freeman, Ian, distinction; Howell, John Kenneth, distinction; McBride, Odette Marie-Chantal, distinction; Walker, Gary Edward, distinction; Baynham, Debra Janet, commendation; Bircher, Alexandra Petronella Rosalie, commendation; Brogan, Kathryn Jane, commendation; Brooke, Sophie Belinda Clare, commendation; Chew, John Stanley, commendation; D'Arcy, Paul William, commendation; Davies, David Rhys, commendation; Davies, Jacqueline Margaret, commendation; Fielding, Clare Rachel, commendation; Ford, Conchita, commendation; Handley, Peter George, commendation; Hood, Adrian, commendation; Johnson, Marianna Kathleen, commendation; Law, Madeleine Ulla, commendation; McGeachy, Robert Archibald Albin, commendation; Nissanka, Vajira Kumari, commendation; Rind, Daniel Moshe Yosef, commendation; Salvin, Fiona Suzanne, commendation; Scott, Jayne Tracey, commendation; Simkins, Keith William, commendation; Smith, Tania Louise Helen, commendation; Thomas, Luke, commendation; Timms, Christopher Paul, commendation; Weddell, Sally Deanne, commendation.

Benjamin, Jacqueline Ann, pass; Bilboul, Alexandra Sara, pass; Dulai, Kulwant Singh, pass; Easter, Christine Mary, pass; Eley-Wells, Lesley Patrice, pass; Gaches, Vincent Paul, pass; Getachew, Melaku, pass; Hussain, Mohammed Belayeth, pass; Ijaola, Olugbeminiyi, pass; Kadri, Farook, pass; Keane, John, pass; Liddle, Dryden Jonathan, pass; McKenna, Carol Antonia, pass; Peabody, Mark Glen, pass; Pugh, Donald George, pass; Rai, Zorabar Singh, pass; Ruyoka, David, pass; Sabri, Sultan Ahmad Khan, pass; Sheth, Ketankumar Hematlal, pass; Slater, Dagmar Anna-Maria, pass; Talbot, Matthew Richard, pass.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr C.J.M. Evans and Miss L.C. MacEwan
The engagement is announced between Christopher, elder son of Mr Timothy Evans, CBE, and Mrs Evans, of Calcot Park, Reading, and Lucinda, daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter MacEwan, of Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire.

Mr P.A.R. Golding and Miss A.J. Scoble
The engagement is announced between Paul, younger son of Mr and Mrs R. Golding, of Thamesmead, London, and Anna, younger daughter of Mr Peter Scoble and the late Mrs Lesley Scoble, formerly of Halstead, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Mr I.W. Graham and the Hon Selina Weld Forester
The engagement is announced between Ian, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Graham, of Raffingora, Zimbabwe, and Selina, eldest daughter of Lord and Lady Forester, of Willey Park, Shropshire.

Mr W.P.M. Houghton and Mlle A.J. Mirouze
The engagement is announced between Mark, son of Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs P.J. Houghton, of Warminster, Wiltshire, and Agnès, daughter of Dr R. Mirouze, of Pierrefitte sur Sauldre, and Mme M. Adam de Beaumais, of Paris.

Mr R.D. Lewis and Miss S.J. Perring
The engagement is announced between Richard, son of Mr and Mrs Henry Lewis, of St Helier, Jersey, and Susannah, daughter of Mr and Mrs Malcolm Perring, of Ascot, Berkshire.

Mr D.G. Noble and Miss C.E. Sleeman
The engagement is announced between David, elder son of the late Mr David Noble and of Mrs Jean Noble, of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, and Caroline, younger daughter of Mrs Norma Sleeman, of Somerset.

Mr S.A. Southgate and Miss H.A.H. Murray
The engagement is announced between Simon Andrew, elder son of Sir Colin and Lady Southgate, of Ruscombe, Berkshire, and Harriet Alexandra Hallam, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Murray, of Little Barugh, Malton, North Yorkshire.

Dr T.L. Tan and Miss F.J. Tsang
The engagement is announced between Toh Lick, elder son of Mr and Mrs Tan Kok Yong, of Singapore, and Fiona Jane Sea Wan, daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Tsang, of London.

Mr A.J. Turnell and Miss E.J.H. Stranack
The engagement is announced between Alan, elder son of Mr Andrew Turnell, of East Hendred, Oxfordshire, and Mrs Kathyrine Turnell, of Manton, Wiltshire, and Emma, daughter of Mr and Mrs Timothy Stranack, of Addison Crescent, London.

Mr J. Whitehurst and Miss N. Bell-Jones
The engagement is announced between John, son of Mr and Mrs Trevor Whitehurst, of Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire, and Nicole, daughter of Mr Derek Bell-Jones, of Aldersey Green, Cheshire, and of Mrs Gillian Bell-Jones, of Fyfield, Essex.

Latest wills

Mary Sharland Morrison, of Hastings, East Sussex, left estate valued at £2,169,783 net.
Tim D'Oyly-Watkins, of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, left estate valued at £516,678 net.
Hilda Corbett, of Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, left estate valued at £556,843 net.
Charles Edward Goddard, of Retford, Nottinghamshire, left estate valued at £534,160 net.
Margaret Josephine Smeesters, of Hove, East Sussex, left estate valued at £783,008 net.
She left £5,000 to the RSPCA.

PERSONAL COLUMN

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000
TRADE: 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

Make no mistake about this; if there is anyone among you who fancies himself wise - wise, I mean, by the standards of this age - he must become a fool if he is to be truly wise. 1 Corinthians 3 : 18

BIRTHS

APPERLEY - On December 18th, to Diana (née Bradley) and Toby, a beautiful daughter, Louise Dian.

BAYNES - On December 16th 1997 at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, to Carey Trevill and Steve Baynes, a daughter, Ella Katheryn.

CHURCH - On December 17th in Singapore, to Carol (née Beaton) and Andrew, a daughter, Antonia Emily Rose, a sister for Alastair.

EKSTEEN - Jean and Elizabeth (née Muro) are delighted to announce the safe arrival of Duncan Alastair on 26th October, a bonny baby brother for Ruth and Frederick.

ELLIOTT - Ralph Thomas. On 13th December at St Thomas', London. A son for Tim and Kathryn.

FERNÁNDEZ - On December 4th, to Jill (née Harris) and Martin, a beautiful son, Thomas Alexander.

HUTCHISON - On 16th December 1997, to Sarah (née Nicholson) and Mark, a son, Freddie Peter.

JONES - On December 11th at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, to Louise and Edward, a son, Henry George.

NEALE - On December 16th 1997 at the John Radcliffe, Oxford, to Fiona (née Aldridge) and Thomas, a daughter, Natasha Rosalind.

ROSS-ROBERTS - On November 12th, to Lisa (née Johnson) and Chris, a handsome boy, Piers Alexander George.

SHEPHERD - On December 17th to Stephanie and Philip, a son, (Felix Robert Hilton) a brother for Imogen and Olivia.

SMITH - On 22nd November 1997 to Charlotte (née Gaiter) and Paul, a son, Louis Henry Monrad, a brother to Tom and Amelia.

VESTEY - On 17th December, to Rachel (née Osborne) and George, a son, Richard George Archibald, a brother for Ruby, Tom and Edmund.

BIRTHS

WALTERS - On December 13th, to Julie (née Tiffin) and Scott, a son, Jack Henry James.

YOUNG - On Sunday December 14th in Paris, France, to Brigitte (née Perrier) and Julian, a beautiful daughter, Amber Madeleine, a sister for Noah.

DEATHS

BENTLEY - Judy on 17th December, aged 77, wife of the late Bill Bentley, mother of Robert and grandmother of Oliver. Sadly missed. Cremation at Golders Green on Tuesday 30th December at 12.15 pm. Flowers or donations to Charing Cross Hospital Dialysis Holiday Fund c/o Chelsea Funeral Directors, 260B Fulham Road, London SW10.

BUNNEY - Herrick CVO. Peacefully at St. Columba's Hospice, Edinburgh on December 17th 1997. Funeral Service at 11.30 Monday 22nd December at St Giles' Cathedral. Service of Thanksgiving at 11.30 Sunday 4th January 1998 at St Giles' Cathedral. No flowers. Donations to Department of Clinical Oncology, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh EH4 2XU.

CAVE - On December 17th, peacefully at home Jonathan Edgar Meredith Cave M.C. O.B.E., aged 84 years formerly Malayan Civil Service. Funeral Service at Ashprington Church, Totnes, Devon on Tuesday 23rd December at 11.30 am. Enquiries to Pering Funeral Services, tel: 01803 862417.

DEATHS

CHIVERS - Felix James of Abbey Spring Cottage, Beaulieu, in his 86th year, on Tuesday 16th December 1997, after a short illness, bravely borne, at Lymington Hospital. Husband of the late Rina, beloved brother of the late Frederick, Lena, Eileen and the late Norman, much loved father of David and Rina, father-in-law of Christine and Howard, grandfather of Joanna, Lisa, Katy, Daniel, Rebecca, James, John and Joseph. Funeral at Southampton Crematorium on Tuesday 23rd December. No flowers by request; donations may be made to the RNLI.

CLEVERDON - On December 15th 1997 peacefully in hospital, Cyril (Clev), formerly of Cranfield University, most dearly loved husband of Mary, cherished father of Jane, Charles and the late Diana and adored Papa to his much loved grandchildren. Funeral service at Bedford Crematorium on Monday December 22nd at 2.30 pm. Family flowers only please but donations, if desired, payable to Ipswich Hospital R.H.S. Trust may be sent to Farthing Funeral Service, 126, High Road West, Felixstowe, IP11 9AL.

DOYLE - David Howard, peacefully after a short illness on Monday 15th December. A private Funeral has taken place on the Isle of Islay. If wished, donations in his memory to the R.F.S.S. or the Injured Jockeys Fund may be sent c/o A.H. Chesser, Funeral Directors, 122 The Hundred, Romsey, Hants (01794 513393).

GORMAN - Frances Isabel Patricia (née Robinson) aged 86, widow of Harry Fortescue, on December 17th peacefully in hospital in Portalegre, Portugal. Loved by all her family, mother of Janet (died July 1997), Charles and Sarah, grandmother of Mark and Jessica, sister of Susan, Walter (died 1981) and Hugh and cousin of Letitia. Funeral Service today, Friday December 19th at 4 pm at Reguengo.

GREGORY - Suddenly on 17th December 1997 at his home in Pendomer, Somerset, James aged 66 years. The dearly loved husband of Gilly, dear father of Mary Jane and Mark and loved brother of Pat. Funeral Service takes place at Pendomer Church at 12.30pm on Monday 29th December, followed by cremation. Family flowers only please. Donations are being invited for The British Lung Foundation c/o G.H. Cook & Son, 8-11 Bond Street, Yeovil, Somerset, tel: (01935) 423463.

HAMILTON - Catharine Mary Hamilton (née Hacking) formerly of Tenterden, Kent, peacefully at Cargenholm Nursing Home, Dumfries on Wednesday 17th December 1997. Beloved wife of the late Jimmy Hamilton. Much loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Family flowers only. Donations to RNLI will be accepted by D.G. Lockhart, Funeral Director, Cuddy Lane, Burn Street, Dalbeattie DG5 4AR, tel: (01556) 610108.

HUGHES - On 13th December 1997 in the Royal Bournemouth Hospital Fr. Joseph Rossall Hughes S.J. aged 79 years. Gave many years to Parish Ministry. Requiem Mass at the Church of Corpus Christi, Boscombe, Bournemouth on Monday 22nd December at 12 noon. No flowers by request. All enquiries to George Scott, Funeral Directors, tel: (01202) 395827.

HUNTER - Winifred Mary 'Muff' (née Nelson), aged 83 years of Harpenden, Hertfordshire, on 16th December peacefully after a short illness. Much loved mother and grandmother. Funeral and Thanksgiving at St Nicholas Church, Harpenden, 12.30 pm Tuesday 23rd December.

HUSAIN - Ahmed passed away peacefully on 16th December. Deeply grieved by wife Sabeeha, children and grandchildren. Prayer meeting at Regents Park Mosque following Friday prayers at 12 noon on Friday 19th December. Tel/Fax: (0171) 286-1040.

JAMES - Nigel Stuart aged 52 after a long illness on December 17th at home. Beloved husband of Bridget and much loved father of Emma and Becky. Beloved son of Mrs Monica James and the late Mr Noel T. James and much loved brother of Peter and Penny. Funeral Service Monday December 22nd at St Michael and All Angels Church, Sunninghill at 2.30pm followed by cremation at Easthampstead Park Crematorium. Family flowers only. Donations if desired, to Thames Valley Hospice c/o Lines Bannister, 69 High Street, Ascot. Tel: 01344 620266.

JEFFRIES - Peacefully in Berwick upon Tweed on December 18th aged 85 years, Don, much loved husband of Ruth and the late Molly, a dear father and grandfather. Funeral at Berwick Parish Church December 22nd at 12.30 pm, followed by private cremation. Family flowers only.

JONES - Suddenly at Woodend Hospital, Aberdeen on 17th December 1997, Professor Reginald Victor Jones C.H., F.R.S., beloved husband of the late Vera Cain, and father of Robert, Rosemary and the late Susan, and dear grandfather to John and Gigina. Funeral Service at the Strathdon Parish Church at 12 noon on Monday 22nd December 1997 and thereafter to Corgarff Cemetery. All friends respectfully invited.

LAWLOR - John Michael Cairnes. Suddenly in Cirencester on 16th December 1997 aged 67. Private funeral. Thanksgiving for his life to be arranged later.

McKECHNIE - Peacefully at home, Ian Humfrey on Wednesday 17th December. Darling husband of Gwen and the late Sheila, father of Gordon and Laura and loving grandfather. No flowers but donations, if desired, to Macmillan Nurses or Multiple Sclerosis Society c/o F.W. Chitty & Co., 45 Elmgrove Road, Weybridge KT13 8PB.

MIZEN - Ida Mary (Peta), peacefully on Thursday 18th December 1997 aged 92. Widow of Edward Oakley Mizen. Funeral Service at 10.30 am on Tuesday 23rd December at Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead, Surrey. Enquiries to Hawkins Funeral Directors, tel: (01372) 372436.

PERTWEE - Dolla Ellen (née Baddeley) on December 16th, aged 91, peacefully at home. Wife of the late Jack, much loved mother of David and Roger and grandmother of Emma, Katie, Charles, Christopher and Richard. Funeral service 9.30 am Wednesday December 24th at St Barnabas Church, Great Tey. Family flowers only but, if desired, donations for St Barnabas Church may be sent c/o R Gwinnell & Sons, 112 Ipswich Road, Colchester CO4 4AA.

PROVAN - Isobel Brown, after long illness died on 10th December 1997, peacefully, aged 79, at the Joan Bartlett Nursing Home. Born in Motherwell, Scotland, and raised in Christchurch, New Zealand, she was deeply loved and admired by all her relatives and friends.

SIMPSON - Lydia died peacefully in hospital on 16th December. Much loved niece of Tamara, mother of Mandy and aunt of Mick, greatly missed by all who knew her. Cremation at Mortlake Crematorium at 1.30 pm on Monday 22nd December; and afterwards at The Queens Club from 2.30pm. Enquiries to J.H. Kenyon 0171 937 0757.

TOBY - On 18th December, Gwen, after a long illness borne with great courage. Funeral Service to be held at Oxford Crematorium, Tuesday 23rd December, 11.30 am. No flowers please but donations for R.S.P.B. c/o J & M Humphris, 32 Albert Street, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 8DG.

WILSON - Kathleen, widow of Dermot, died peacefully on 16th December aged 85. Funeral Service will be held Tuesday 23rd December at 2.30 pm Beckenham Crematorium. Family flowers only. Donations to The Royal Marsden c/o Francis Chappell & Sons, 231 High Street, Bromley, tel: (0181) 460-1720.

WILSON - Frank, aged 90, born in De Beauvoir Town, London, and long resident in France and Australia before returning to England, died on 17th December 1997, peacefully, in hospital. These two shared many happy years, devotedly wished to be together in death, and hopefully, in one form or another, thereafter. Joint funeral service in Holy Trinity Church, Roehampton on Monday 22nd December at 12 noon, all friends invited, followed by cremation at Putney Crematorium attended by relatives and close friends. Family flowers and donations, if desired, if desired, to Motor Neurone Disease Association c/o T.H. Sanders & Sons, 12 Meddfield Street, London, SW15.

WILSON - Frank D.Sc., C.Biol., F.I.Biol. (See Provan - Isobel Brown).

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

HUGHES - The funeral service of Francis Hughes, OBE, will be held at The Church of the Sacred Heart, Mayfield Lane, Wadhurst, Sussex, Saturday 20th December at 12.30 pm and afterwards at home.

THANKSGIVING SERVICES

LINSLEY - Robert. A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Mr Robert Linsley, the late Secretary of the Carlton Club, will be held at 4 pm on Monday 19th January 1998 at St George's Church, Hanover Square, London W1. The service will be followed by a reception at the Carlton Club. Those wishing to attend should please apply to Miss Mary Sharp, Carlton Club, 69 St James's Street, London SW1A 1PJ (Fax No: 0171-495 4090).

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

CARPENTER - Miss V.E. Formerly of Dame Alice Owen's Girls' School, Islington. Always remembered B.V.F.

WARD - Wilfrid. Much loved husband of Jean and father of John and Joanna. 10th Dec 1981 - 19th Dec 1992.

BIRTHDAYS

AMELIA Rose Bryony Elizabeth Bennett Box is 10 today

WANTED

MINK COATS, fox coats purchased Best price paid. All inquiries/details Box No 7452

TICKETS FOR SALE

TICKETS
Five Nations Rugby
F 1 Grand Prixs
Wimbledon Debs
World Cup France '98
CHICAGO, PHANTOM,
LORD OF THE DANCE
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OBITUARIES

PROFESSOR R. V. JONES

R. V. Jones, CH, CB, CBE, FRS, wartime intelligence scientist and Professor of Natural Philosophy, University of Aberdeen, 1946-81, died in Aberdeen on December 17 aged 86. He was born on September 27, 1911.

When, in June 1940, an obscure Air Ministry scientific officer, R. V. Jones, was told to report to the Cabinet Room where Churchill was convening a meeting, he at first thought that his summons was a joke. Although he had been working for some months on Germany's innovative aerial weaponry Jones had no idea that he and his research had become a matter of such pressing concern at so high a level. But the new Prime Minister — a man of very different kidney from his predecessor — was alive to the vital importance of winning the scientific war at all costs. Abandoning all considerations of rank in that august company, he invited this extraordinarily young-looking man to tell the War Cabinet everything he knew about the German capability to bomb Britain.

Jones explained to the meeting that Germany had perfected techniques by which its bombers could fly along radio beams to bomb targets with hitherto unimagined precision. Britain would be vulnerable to pinpoint attack in any weather and at night. This was at a time when RAF attacks conducted in such conditions were missing their targets by a margin of several miles.

"When Dr Jones had finished," recorded Churchill, "there was a general air of incredulity". As a result Jones was given all the resources he needed to develop ways of combating this menace, and the bomber was bested. Churchill revelled in what he called "The Wizard War" and always acknowledged Jones with gratitude as "the man who broke the bloody beams".

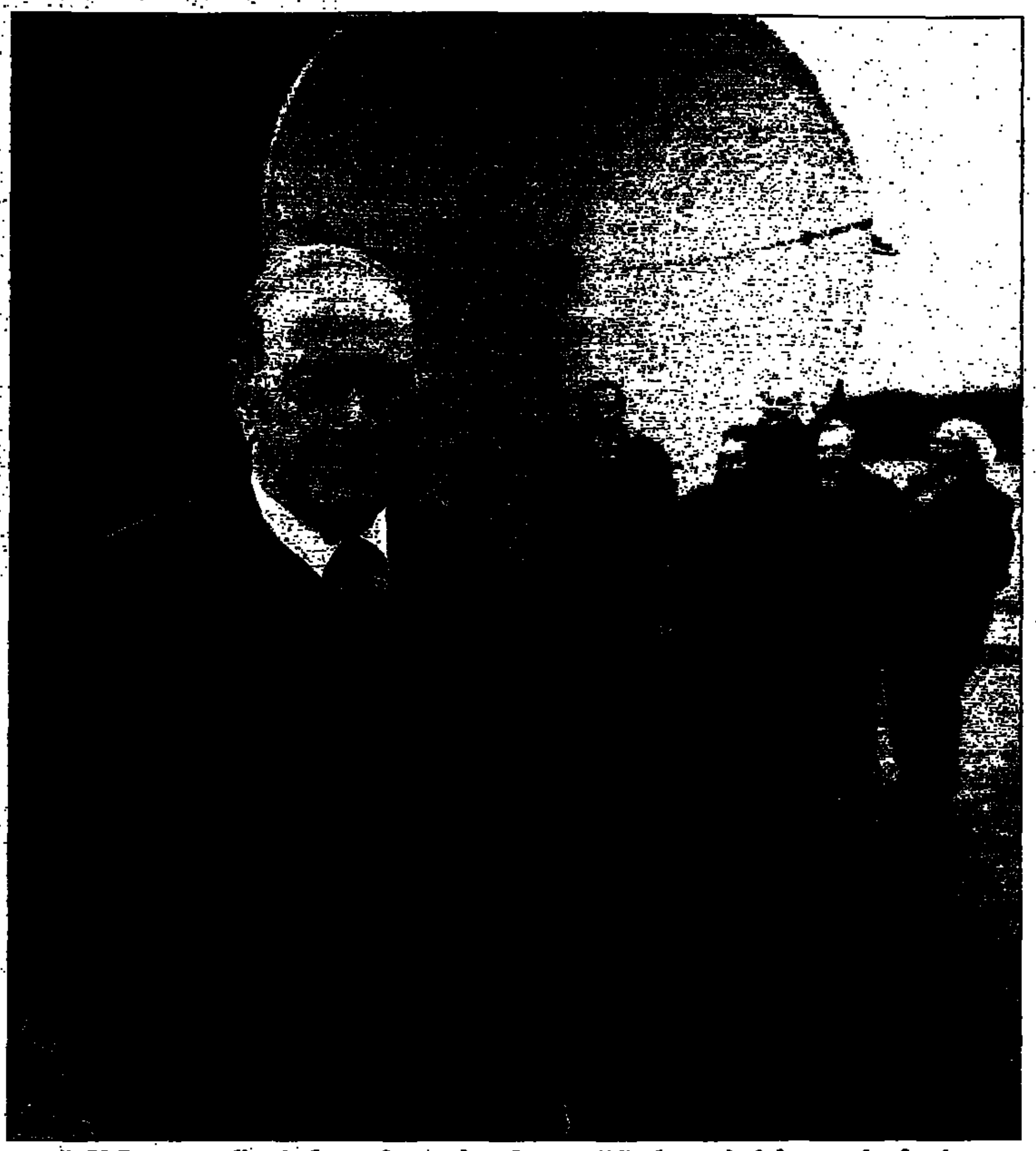
It was the first of those strokes of genius by which Jones made his vital contribution to the victory over the Luftwaffe. These were many and varied: perhaps the most spectacular (and yet wonderfully simple) was "window", strips of metallic foil dropped from bombers, which could be made to confuse enemy ground radar and, on occasions — as at D-Day — to synthesise whole "ghost" fleets of Allied ships. Jones's exploits inspired the Yorkshire Television documentary series *The Secret War of Dr Jones* (based on the recollections which led to his book, *Most Secret War*, 1978).

Reginald Victor Jones was born in London and educated at Alleyn's School, Dulwich. He went to Oxford as an exhibitioner at Wadham and graduated with first class honours in physics. Next he carried out research on infra-red radiation under the supervision of Professor F. A. Lindemann (later Lord Cherwell and Churchill's chief scientific adviser); for this he was awarded his DPhil in 1934. Thereafter he held a senior studentship in astronomy at Balliol and continued to work in the Clarendon Laboratory.

In 1935 Lindemann found out that Jones was trying to detect aircraft by the infra-red radiation from their engines. Lindemann and Churchill were at that time trying to persuade those in power that air defence was possible (although the Prime Minister, Baldwin, was convinced that "the bomber would always get through"). In 1936 Jones began work as a scientific officer for the Air Ministry. However, forces within the Air Ministry who were emotionally committed to radar thought (wrongly) that infra-red detection might be a successful rival to their own ideas. As a result, Jones was lent for a time to an Admiralty research establishment.

But by early 1939, when it became clear that British Intelligence knew far too little about the scientific side of the German war machine, it was decided to employ a scientist to see what could be done to improve matters. Offered the job, Jones at once saw its immense potential.

After the successful "bending of the beams" came year after year of astonishing success. Another masterly piece of analysis was Jones's discovery of the tactical and technical details of the German radar-controlled night-fighter defences and of the enemy's airborne radar. Much later in the war, Jones was responsible for analysing the flood of intelligence reports about the V1 and the V2. He established that there were in fact two quite different weapons (a fact which was not at first obvious) and he determined the characteristics of each (size of warhead and probable accuracy).



R. V. Jones standing in front of a wartime German Würzburg air defence radar for the Yorkshire Television programme, *The Secret War of Dr Jones*, 1977

Apart from these spectacular achievements, there were many others less well-known. As one of his section once remarked, "It's our job to prevent people fighting ghosts"; in other words, it was important to determine that the enemy were not about to take some particular step, and thus to prevent wasted allied defensive effort. It was always difficult to prove a negative, but it was quite frequently done. Jones's brilliant success at Intelligence analysis depended on a combination of qualities. He saw that it was vital to his usefulness to build up his credibility, and so was very cautious in checking his conclusions as fully as possible before reporting them. His reports were models of clarity and frankness. (He was early amused to discover that one way to be quite sure that a report would be read by everyone was to be ordered to withdraw it after distribution because some VIP disliked what it said.)

He also established particularly happy relations with those such as photo-reconnaissance pilots and agents who had to undertake hazardous missions at the request of Intelligence, as he did with members of the fighting services at all levels. He and his colleagues told the suppliers of intelligence what to look for. This stimulated enthusiasm in those obtaining, as well as those engaged in, decoding or relatively monotonous tasks such as the interpretation of air photographs or prisoner interrogation.

Throughout most of the war years Jones held the post of Assistant Director of Intelligence (Science) at Air Ministry. He was appointed CBE in 1942. Astonishingly, when Lindemann recommended Jones for the CBE for his discovery of the beam-controlled bombing, he was told by the Establishment that Jones's rank and salary were insufficiently high for an award at that level: it did not take the "Prof" long to point out the proper remedy. At the end of the war Jones was appointed CB and awarded the US Medal for Merit and the US Medal for Freedom with Silver Palm.

In 1946 he was appointed Director of Scientific Intelligence at the Air Ministry. But at that moment the chair of Natural Philosophy at the University of Aberdeen became vacant and he was persuaded by a wartime colleague to apply for it. He was elected and was an immediate success with his students, many of whom were, at that time, ex-service personnel. He adopted with enthusiasm the Scottish tradition by which a professor frequently lectures to his first-year class. He was a superb lecturer, clear interesting and amusing, with the necessary (though not intrusive) touch of showmanship.

He was instrumental in persuading the university to build a very fine new building for his department, and he served in due course as Dean of Science. He took an individual line in university policy, vigorously opposing the rapid expansion in student numbers since he felt that this would reduce academic standards. He also held the view that some of the new subjects lacked intellectual rigour. Although, or perhaps because, he made no secret of his lack of sympathy with many fashionable points of view, he retained the affection and respect of most (though not all) of his colleagues and students by his charm, his honesty and his warm sympathies.

At Aberdeen in the postwar years Jones had to rebuild a research school more more less from scratch. His main research interest was in carrying measurement to its fundamental limits, set by Brownian motion and noise. To do this he developed many delicate instruments, such as an optical lever to measure very small angles. He used these in a number of applications to torque measurement, radiation detection, non-deflection of light in a magnetic field and radiation pressure. With his colleague J. C. S. Richards, he improved capacitance micrometry to measure minute displacements.

They used this to make seismometers, a particularly accurate tiltmeter, and other instruments. Jones also initiated the growth of large crystals for optical, and subsequently, for laser purposes. He was a devoted experimental physicist, never happier than when working himself on apparatus or in the workshop that he had developed.

All this work and his prewar work on infra-red radiation had been recognised by his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1965. In 1994 he was appointed a Companion of Honour for his overall contribution to science over so many years. He served on many national scientific and technical committees and was twice recalled to head important strategic and intelligence investigations for the Ministry of Defence.

He had a profound interest in the history and philosophy of science, which led to his becoming chairman of the British Committee for the History of Science. For many years he edited the *Notes and Records of the Royal Society*. He was in great demand to lecture to learned societies on the history of science, and also to the Staff College on strategy and intelligence. He was an honorary member of the US Air Force.

When young, he had been devoted to practical joking, and he wrote a celebrated article on the theory of the subject. He was convivial and good company; his after-dinner performances on the mouth organ (of which he owned several of very different sizes) were skilful and hilarious.

His wife, Vera, whom he married in 1940, died in 1992. He is survived by a daughter and a son. Another daughter, Susan, who had been a former Miss Scotland, predeceased him.

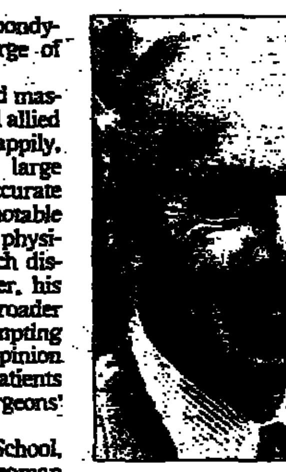
PHILIP YEOMAN

Philip Yeoman, orthopaedic surgeon, died in Bath on November 29 aged 74. He was born on April 29, 1923.

BY THE time he arrived at the Bath and Wessex Orthopaedic Hospital in 1964, Philip Yeoman was already distinguished — first for his part in treating Sir Winston Churchill for a spinal fracture in 1960 and a hip fracture in 1962 and, secondly, as one of few experts on injuries of the brachial plexus, the nerve complex between the shoulder and neck. He was to achieve international recognition partly for pioneering novel surgery for these injuries, commonly suffered by motorcyclists, but also for operative correction of rigid spinal deformities caused by ankylosing spondylitis, an arthritic scourge of young men.

Such surgery required mastery of anatomical detail allied to sang-froid which, happily, Yeoman possessed in large measure. A rapid but accurate surgeon, he achieved notable results in restoring the physical independence of such disabled patients. However, his expertise covered a broader orthopaedic field, prompting wide demand for his opinion by colleagues and patients alike. He was a surgeons' surgeon.

From Sedbergh School, Philip Metcalfe Yeoman moved in 1941 to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, to study medicine. During clinical training at University College Hospital, London, he joined a medical relief team sent to the



newly liberated concentration camp at Belsen in 1945; this scarring encounter with death and disease left its mark.

After qualifying in 1947 and taking up junior house appointments and an anatomy demonstratorship, he did his National Service as a medical officer with the RAF. Developing an interest in orthopaedic surgery, he became FRCS in 1957.

At the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital he was senior registrar to Professor Herbert Seddon, the doyen of dealers with peripheral nerve injuries and locomotor paralysis. Encouraged to study brachial plexus injuries, often the source of useless insensitive arms and obligatory amputation, he refined investigative techniques to determine a more accurate prognosis which identified patients who might benefit from surgery. This research gained him an MD in 1963, the Robert Jones gold medal and an American travelling fellowship of the British Orthopaedic Association in 1964.

Yeoman's appointment as consultant orthopaedic surgeon to the Bath and Wessex Orthopaedic Hospital in 1964 came at a time when its services had been hit hard by the premature deaths of two consultants. Largely by his expertise and energy, the orthopaedic unit was rejuvenated and became a Mecca for talented surgical trainees.

With the co-operation of physicians at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, in Bath, Yeoman promoted special clinics to rationalise the surgical management of severe rheumatoid arthritis. The bonus for patient care was substantial and stimulated numerous conferences, papers, book chapters and ultimately a textbook, *Orthopaedic Practice*, co-edited by Yeoman. At the Royal Society of Medicine, he served as president of the orthopaedic section in 1983.

Accepting a growing burden of administration, he was elected to the Council of the British Orthopaedic Association, becoming vice-president for 1984-85. An examiner and Hunterian Professor at the Royal College of Surgeons of England, he was the first Bath surgeon elected to its council, continuing to serve after retiring from the NHS in 1988. When opportunity presented, he enjoyed gardening, painting and golf. The recurrence of prostatic carcinoma this year gradually reduced his activities, but not his spirit or mental acuity.

In 1947 he married a state registered nurse, Idonea Scarrott. His wife, two sons and daughter survive him.

HAIG C. GALUSTIAN

Haig C. Galustian, businessman, , died on December 9 aged 89. He was born on December 21, 1907.

SPORTSMAN, political exile, business leader and even restaurateur, Haig Galustian was, above all, one of those invaluable men whose life formed an active link between Britain and countries overseas: in his case, Armenia and Iran.

Born as an Armenian (and thus Christian) Iranian, Haig Caro Galustian was a descendant of that colony of industrious Armenians brought in during the 17th century by the Safavid Shah Abbas from the Caucasus to Julfa on the outskirts of his capital, Isfahan. Tall and athletic, he played for the Iranian national football team in the 1930s against Russian visiting national sides.

Galustian's first contacts with the British came during the Second World War. Iran was at that time occupied by the Allies and served as a land bridge for the supply of military equipment to the Russians. Galustian acted as a liaison officer with the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation (UKCC). It was his function to ensure an even distribution of commodities, such as wheat and kerosene, throughout the British zone of occupation in southern and eastern Iran.

Friendships made at the time with British officers of the UKCC proved helpful to Galustian. They enabled him to travel to Britain soon after the war and to begin his business career by buying up surplus British army supplies. Such items as boots and blankets then commanded a high premium in Iran, which was still far from becoming even a semi-industrialised economy.

In 1946 Galustian became an agent for several British engineering companies. Among these were Sir Alexander Gibbs & Partners, for whom he helped to secure a most important contract for the supply of fresh piped water for the city of Tehran.

Other companies for whom he acted were Vickers Armstrong, Scottish Aviation, Stanton and Staveley (who made large diameter pipes for the oil industry), Avery Hardoll (petrol pumps), Marconi and Rolls-Royce.

Politics now intervened, however. In 1951 Mossadeq surged to power on a wave of nationalism. In a bid to rid Iran of British influences, he expelled Galustian who, he alleged, had "drunk too deeply of Thames water".

Thus Galustian and his family came to settle down in Wimbledon. He proceeded to open an office in Kensingston, near the Church of St Sarkis, which had been endowed by Calouste Gulbenkian in 1923.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and now a British citizen, Galustian was a leading figure in the export of British engineering goods to Iran, as well representing Iran Air in London. He also started a club to popularise Iranian food. That celebrated gastronome, André L. Simon, records enjoying one of his "Memorable Meals".

The advent of the Iranian Islamic revolution in 1979 meant that neither Haig Galustian nor his son and partner, Richard, chose to continue making business journeys to Iran. But, happily, the end of the Soviet empire allowed them to visit Armenia, while Galustian remained a most generous supporter of the Armenian community and its charities.

His devoted wife died young, leaving him to bring up their three small children. He is survived by two sons and a daughter.

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ON THIS DAY

December 19, 1932

Many years after the end of the First World War, a former German soldier was sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude for treason in having betrayed to the French the forthcoming German poison gas attack in 1915.

FIRST GERMAN GAS ATTACK

SENTENCE ON AN EX-SOLDIER

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

BERLIN, DEC.18

Sentence of 10 years' penal servitude was yesterday passed on the 41-year-old ex-soldier August Jäger, who has been standing his trial before the Supreme Court of the Reich at Leipzig on a charge of treason, in having betrayed to the French as a deserter the imminence of the first German poison-gas attack, the brunt of which fell on French and Canadian troops.

Jäger, on whom suspicion had previously fallen through statements contained in a captured French diary, was once tried and acquitted for lack of evidence in 1920. The renewal of the charge nearly 18 years after the event (in another two years it would have lapsed under the Statute of Limitations) arose from the publication in 1930 of an article by the French general commanding on the sector involved, in which "a German deserter, August Jäger," was named as having told the French what impended. Incidentally, the whole burden of General Ferry's article was that the French command had not taken adequate counter-measures against the gas, which was in the event released on April 22 instead of April 15 (the night of Jäger's capture); but the representative of the German Ministry of Defence maintained that the panic and shock effect of the first gas attack had been weakened by its betrayal.

The Public Prosecutor had demanded 14 years' penal servitude for Jäger (who has already served a year in prison), stating that he refrained from demanding the death penalty because material injury had demonstrably not been suffered by the German arms. The Court, in passing sentence, said it was reluctant to inflict 10 years' penal servitude, the minimum, but was bound by the law. General Ferry's article had not influenced its decision, and the treachery with which he was charged was established by the fact that he had not thrown away his anti-gas package (a primitive respirator served out to the German troops), although he had known that it would provoke questions, and that he had given information about its purpose. The only circumstance in alleviation was that the betrayal had had no injurious results for Germany.

THE LATE M.SANTOS DUMONT

REBURIAL IN RIO THIS WEEK

Rio de Janeiro, Dec.18

The body of M.Santos Dumont, after having lain in state in the crypt of the Cathedral of São Paulo for two days, was brought here by train.

On its arrival this morning it was met by an escort of military and naval aircraft which performed evolutions during its transit from the station to the Cathedral. The public will be admitted to pay their last respects to the Father of Aviation until Tuesday, when, with the full honours due to a Minister of State, his remains will finally be laid to rest in the cemetery of St. John the Baptist.

A public holiday has been proclaimed for the day of the interment.

THE TIMES TODAY

NEWS

SAS help to arrest Croat suspects

■ SAS troops joined Dutch marines in pre-dawn raids in central Bosnia, arresting two Croats suspected of war crimes, one of whom was injured in a shoot-out in his bedroom.

The operation belied Nato claims that suspected war criminals are arrested only during normal duties for the Bosnian Stabilisation Force. Nato sources in Sarajevo said the move could be the prelude to an operation to seize "big fish" suspects, such as Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic Page 1

Princess and Dodi's 'last interview'

■ A French magazine published what it claimed was the last interview with Diana, Princess of Wales, and Dodi Fayed, in which they speak intimately about their relationship and the possibility of marriage and children. They were said to have spoken just weeks before their fatal car crash .... Page 1

Heroine dies in fire

One of New York's richest women, Catalina Meyer, 60, died in her burning five-storey mansion while trying to save a trapped *friend* .... Page 1

Code of practice

A new code of practice, designed to give people greater protection from intrusion by newspapers and magazines, was dubbed the "toughest in Europe" by Lord Wakeham .... Page 4

Violence 'distorted'

Death has become so commonplace *in British* television soap operas that it is distorting the nation's concept of violence, according to research .... Page 5

MI6 man jailed

Richard Tomlinson, a former MI6 officer, was jailed for 12 months for seeking to sell his story to an Australian publisher, but government lawyers fear he will try again..................... Page 6

Hindley fights on

Myra Hindley vowed to fight on for her freedom after failing to overturn the Home Secretary's decision that she must die in jail .... Page 7

Historic day for Scots

The legislation that will create the first Scottish Parliament for almost 300 years was published by Donald Dewar, Scottish Secretary, who hailed it as an historic and radical document ...... Page 8

After Dolly, Polly

Scottish scientists responsible for Dolly the cloned sheep have now produced Polly — a lamb that makes a human blood-clotting *protein* .... Page 9

Philby 'suicide bid'

Kim Philby, the double agent who betrayed Britain during the *Cold War, tried to take his own* life soon after defecting to Moscow in the 1960s, according to a book by his widow......... Page 13

Children captive

At least three Dallas children *were still held captive by a gun*man who the day before had kidnapped more than 60..... Page 14

Clinton invitations

President Clinton will kick-start the Middle East peace process by inviting Israeli and Palestinian leaders to meet him in Washington next month................ Page 15

European risk

Tony Blair has promised to bring Europe closer to the people when Britain takes the EU presidency next month, but the government message of "greater transparency" risks backfiring thanks to its media managers............. Page 16

Sithole to appeal

The Rev Ndabaningi Sithole, 77, was sentenced to two years in jail for conspiring to blow up President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, then given bail to appeal against his conviction .... Page 17

Daimler suffers new safety setback

■ The German car manufacturer Daimler Benz is delaying the launch of its Smart model because of safety problems — *months after its Mercedes A-Class turned over in trials.* The two-seater Smart car, developed and built in partnership with SMH, the Swiss watch manufacturers, flipped over during the same "elk tests" for emergency road holding.................. Page 1

MENAHEM KAHANA / EPA

A clergyman cleans a nativity-scene fresco at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem before Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve

BUSINESS

Supermarkets: The prospect of an Asda bid for Safeway receded after Archie Norman, Asda's chairman, poured cold water on speculation .... Page 25

Fine: The London Stock Exchange has fined JP Morgan, the US investment bank, £350,000 for breaking the rules — the first such fine since 1995 .... Page 25

Boeing: The manufacturer of most of the world's civil aircraft was *warned by the Federal Aviation* Authority, the US safety regulator, that its production lines were "out of control" .... Page 25

Markets: The FTSE 100 fell 22.5 points to close at 5168.3. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose to 104.1 after a rise to $1.6607 and to DM2.9434........................... Page 28

SPORT

Cricket: England are favourites to beat West Indies in the Champions Trophy final in Sharjah, but must beware in case Brian Lara erupts with the bat.......................... Page 48

Football: England will play World Cup warm-up matches against Chile and Saudi Arabia, both at Wembley. Opponents for other planned games have yet to be decided........................... Page 48

Boxing: Few, if any, in boxing hist*ory have been given such a chance* to make it in America as Naseem Hamed, who takes on Kevin Kelley in New York......................... Page 46

Rugby union: Andrew Leeds, a former Australia international and rugby league player, has moved to Leicester on a temporary two-month contract.................... Page 45

Time, please: "The harsh probability is that the South Bank may have missed last orders in the lottery saloon" — Richard Morrison on funding rule changes......... Page 32

Over the top: At the Almeida, Jonathan Kent has given Gogol's comedy *The Government Inspector* a marvellously unconventional and hysterical staging............. Page 32

Year of pop: *David Sinclair looks* back on a 1997 of unexpected highs and lows for the key players in British pop — and on the growth of a chilling trend.................. Page 33

Blade runners: Still moving in perfect harmony after a 20-year partnership, skaters Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean unveil their new show, *Ice Adventures*, in Birmingham........................ Page 34

TOMORROW

IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

■ **FAKE FUR, OLD LACE**
Embroidery, delicate beading and fake-fur trim are back after one hundred years

■ **THE GOOD FIGHT**
The choir schools that battle over the best boys' voices

Style secret: Wit, style and panache — the pauper's secret to dressing well .... Page 18

Parent pressure: At Christmas nature abhors a single woman, and parents worry most. Rachel Morris advises .... Page 19

Pet hate: The brains behind Tamagotchi is a woman of 31. Moira Petty met her .... Page 19

Ghostbusting: Has Spain laid to rest the ghost of 40 years of Fran*co's dictatorship?*........ Pages 35-37

Sing in praise: Pupils may grumble, but the school carol service is a fine tradition, says Anne Lee.................................. Page 38

Non-violent reactions: Most viewers do not spontaneously express concern about television violence. Raymond Snoddy looks at new research............................. Page 41

17, 35, 36, 43, 46, 49. *Bonus*: 7. There was no jackpot winner so the £4.8 million prize rolls over to give tomorrow's game a guaranteed £25 million jackpot. On Wednesday, seven ticket-holders matched five balls and the bonus to win £212,000; 333 with five balls won £2,786; 18,407 with four won £110.

RADIO & TV

Preview: How to eat well, and stay well, at Christmas, *999 Lifesavers* (BBC1, 8pm). **Review:** Peter Barnard watches the environmental lobby under attack....... Pages 46, 47

A tongue for Europe

If Britain's official spokesmen treat the media of Britain's partners with contempt, the Government will find its EU stewardship derided, its achievements belittled and its goals mocked .... Page 21

Mandela to Mbeke

South Africa must preserve a First World economy while addressing core Third World issues. Reconciliation and reconstruction should operate in tandem................ Page 21

Prisoners of politics

Men properly convicted of murder should serve the sentence that justice demands, not that which expediency may require............ Page 21

MATTHEW PARRIS

This is the time for Tony Blair and Gordon Brown to be brave and original. It is their watershed year. By *next* December we shall know whether this Labour Prime Minister is a man to be knocked off course by his party, as both James Callaghan and Harold Wilson were .... Page 20

JOHN LLOYD

Oh, Tony (says the Parliamentary Labour Party), do not paint us as men and women who deprive the hard-pressed of any of the little they have. Let us seem to be carers a little longer......................... Page 20

PHILIP HOWARD

The bell struck midnight. Scrooge groaned at this 154th annual resurrection of his Christmas carol, and reached for the Teasmade on his bedside table. But this uncharacteristic luxury contained only hot water, without the comforting smell of scalded teabags.................. Page 20

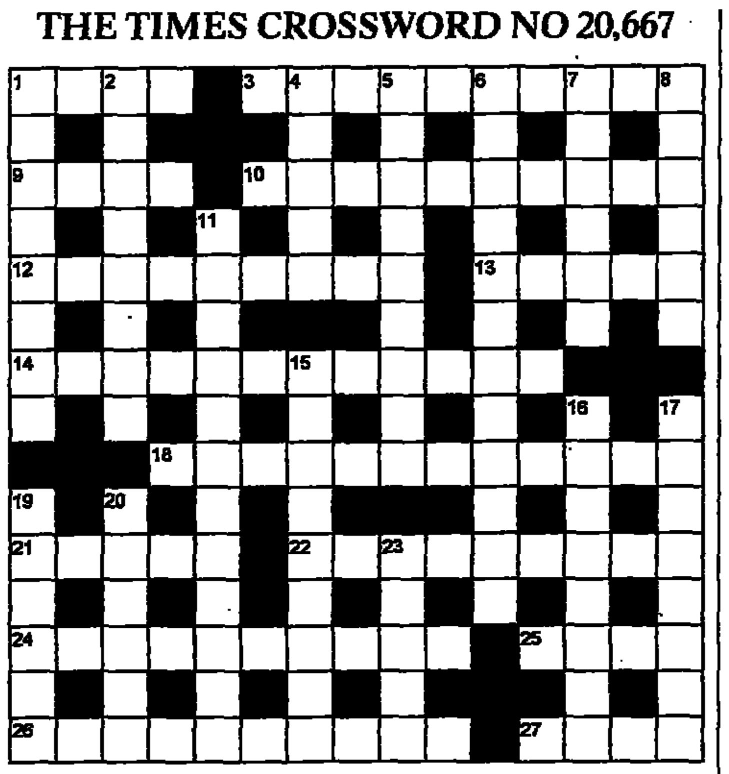
OBITUARIES

Professor R. V. Jones, Air Ministry scientist; **Philip Yeoman**, orthopaedic surgeon; **Haig C. Galustian**, businessman .... Page 23

LETTERS

Single currency; Tory leadership; charities' tax breaks; VSO medical aid; images of Shylock; South Bank glass roof; ladybird spider; snow chaos.............................. Page 21

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,667



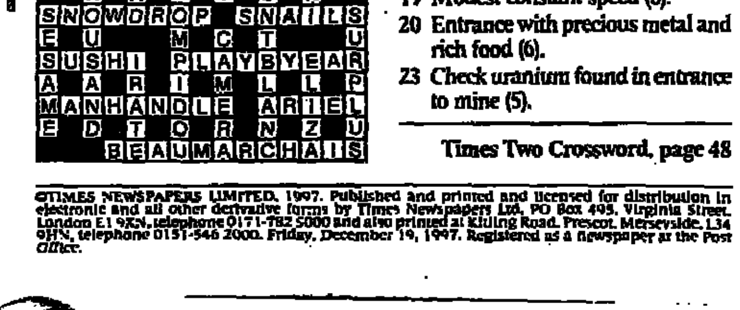
ACROSS

1 He's not assertive enough with a *naughty child* (4)
3 Staff in a line to shut up things in shop (10).
9 Controlled the way we speak (4).
10 Description given by worker for auditor (10).
12 Measure of drink for American friend? Exactly! (9).
13 Scoundrel and libertine, but good at heart (5).
14 No fear of being unemployed? Just the reverse (7,5).
18 Silver-grey vessel I have left concealed, with hostile intent (12).
21 Cast get over closure of theatre (5).
22 Revolutionary's attempt to im*pose silence on a government* agent (9).
24 Spend bills in exchange for charms (10).
25 Drop in speed (4).
26 Composure displayed by mimic taken back into theatrical group (10).
27 Greeks' walk from Piraeus to Athens (4).

DOWN

1 For instance, fighter's bitterness when on the road (8).
2 Think referee has overrun time (8).
4 Drinking establishment a company set up in the fifties (5).
5 My one opus turned out like *Hamlet* (9).
6 City where foreign money is put into dodgy casinos (3,9).
7 Tree house (6).
8 Rig up trap for little animal (6).
11 Composer providing actor/manager with capital (6,6).
15 Mark in red metallic element (9).
16 Reserved novel — it's held up (8).
17 Wild frenzy and disorder this year (8).
19 Modest constant speed (6).
20 Entrance with precious metal and rich food (6).
23 Check uranium found in entrance to mine (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,666



Times Two Crossword, page 48

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 8 03 am — Sun sets: 3 53 pm

Moon sets *11.10 am* — Moon rises *9.58 pm*

Last quarter December 21
London 3.53 pm to 8.03 am
Bristol 4 03 pm to 8.13 am
Edinburgh 3.39 pm to 8 42 am
Manchester 3.50 pm to 8.22 am
Penzance 4.21 pm to 8 18 am

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 43.6% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the second half of 1996

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FORECAST

☐ **General:** Scotland and eastern England will start dull and wet. However, the rain will become confined to the Northern Isles and the far northeast of Scotland. Remaining parts will have some good sunny breaks. Showers are most likely in southwest England, southern Wales and Northern Ireland. By evening they may become more frequent and longer in southwest England.

Tonight southwest England and South Wales will be mainly cloudy with rain. Elsewhere it will be dry with clear spells. Mostly light winds, with mist and fog patches.

☐ **London, SE England, Central S England, E Midlands:** early mist will clear to leave some sunny spells. Mild. A light southeasterly wind. Max 12C (54F)

☐ **E Anglia, E England, Central N England, NE England:** rain in the east, then sunny spells spreading from the west. A light southerly wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **W Midlands, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** mist and fog will clear. Sunny spells. A light to moderate southeasterly wind. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **Channel Isles, SW England:** mild with sunny spells and showers. Rain later. A moderate southeast wind. Max 13C (55F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll, NW Scotland:** sunny spells with occasional showers. A moderate southeasterly wind. Max 10C (50F).

☐ **Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** dull with rain. A moderate to fresh southeast wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **N Ireland:** breezy but mild with sunny spells and just the odd shower. A moderate southeast wind. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** northern parts mainly dry with fog patches clearing slowly. A few showers in southern areas. Wind moderate, southeasterly. Max 12C (54F).

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	-	0.01	6	43	d
Anglesey	X				
Aspatria	-	0.50	7	45	r
Aviemore	-	0.02	6	43	r
Belfast	-	0.68	9	48	r
Birmingham	X				
Bognor R	-	0.59	11	52	r
Bournem'th	-	0.46	11	52	c
Bristol	0.1	0.10	12	54	r
Buxton	-	0.57	5	41	r
Cardiff	2.5	0.22	12	54	r
Cleethorpes	-	0.39	7	45	r
Colwyn Bay	-	0.10	6	43	r
Cromer	-	0.18	8	46	r
Dunbar	X				
Eastbourne	-	0.78	11	52	r
Edinburgh	-	0.13	7	45	r
Exmouth	3.5	0.38	12	54	s
Falmouth	6.5	0.24	14	57	s
Fishguard	X				
Folkestone	-	1.26	10	50	r
Glasgow	-	0.20	7	45	r
Guernsey	3.2	0.16	13	55	c
Hastings	-	0.98	10	50	r
Hayling I	-	0.56	10	50	r
Herne Bay	-	0.58	10	50	sh
Hove	-	0.40	11	52	sh
Hunstanton	X	0.24	8	46	r
Isle of wight	-	0.37	11	52	r
Jersey	0.2	0.15	11	52	c
Leeds	-	0.56	7	45	r
Lerwick	-	-	5	41	b
Littlehmptn	-	0.79	11	52	r
London	-	0.54	11	52	r
Lowestoft	-	0.37	9	48	r
Manchester	-	0.19	8	46	r
Margate	-	0.64	9	48	r
Minehead	2.9	0.33	13	55	s
Morecambe	-	0.20	8	46	r
Newcastle	-	0.33	7	45	r
Newquay	5.4	0.34	13	55	s
Norwich	-	0.24	8	46	r
Oxford	X				
Penzance	X	0.26	14	57	s
Poole	-	0.50	11	52	b
Ross-o-wye	-	0.36	10	50	r
Saunton Snd	4.0	0.11	14	57	s
Scarboro'	-	0.15	6	43	r
Shrewsbury	X				
Skegness	-	0.39	7	45	r
Southend	-	0.48	9	48	r
Southport	-	0.14	8	46	r
Southsea	-	0.64	11	52	r
Swanage	-	0.28	11	52	c
Teignmouth	3.3	0.43	13	55	b
Tenby	4.3	0.09	12	54	s
Tiree	-	0.08	9	48	r
Torquay	4.2	0.34	13	55	s
Tynemouth	-	0.39	7	45	g
Weymouth	0.6	0.25	12	54	b

ABROAD

	C	F	
Ajaccio	17	63	f
Akrotiri	17	63	s
Alex'dria	20	68	c
Algiers	17	63	f
Amst'dm	-4	25	s
Athens	7	45	f
Bahrain	22	72	f
Bangkok	35	95	s
Barbados	29	84	f
Barcelona	15	59	d
Beirut	18	64	f
Belgrade	-4	25	f
Berlin	-9	16	s
Bermuda	21	70	r
B Aires	22	72	f
Biarritz	16	61	f
Borde'x	8	46	f
Brussels	-2	28	c
Budapst	-4	25	s
Cairo	21	70	f
Cape Tn	18	64	c
Chicago	7	45	s
Ch'church	X		
Cologne	-1	30	sn
C'phagn	-2	28	s
Corfu	10	50	r
Dublin	5	41	c
Dubrovnik	X		
Faro	18	64	r
Florence	7	45	f
Frankfurt	-1	30	f
Funchal	20	68	r
Geneva	2	36	c
Gibraltar	18	64	r
Helsinki	1	34	d
Hong K	25	77	s
Innsbrck	6	43	f
Istanbul	0	32	sn
Jeddah	28	82	s
Jo'burg	24	75	f
Karachi	X		
L Palmas	25	77	s
Le Touquet	1	34	f
Lisbon	17	63	c
Locarno	1	34	sn
L Angels	17	63	s
Luxembg	-3	27	r
Luxor	22	72	s
Madrid	13	55	r
Majorca	17	63	f
Malaga	15	59	r
Malta	18	64	f
Melb'rne	20	68	s
Mexico C	X		
Miami	21	70	s
Milan	1	34	sn
Montreal	4	39	X
Moscow	-9	16	c
Munich	-2	28	s
Nairobi	25	77	f
Naples	15	59	f
N Delhi	16	61	f
N York	11	52	s
Nice	6	43	c
Oslo	1	34	c
Paris	2	36	r
Peking	-2	28	fg
Perth	25	77	s
Prague	-5	23	c
Reykjavik	6	43	f
Rhodes	13	55	f
Rio de J	23	73	f
Riyadh	22	72	s
Rome	15	59	f
Salzburg	1	34	s
S Fr'isco	11	52	s
Santiago	22	72	s
S Paulo	X		
Seoul	7	45	c
Sing'por	27	81	c
St'kholm	X		
Strasb'rg	-1	30	r
Sydney	33	91	s
Tangier	18	61	r
Tel Aviv	19	66	f
Tenerife	24	75	f
Tokyo	9	48	c
Toronto	6	43	s
Tunis	20	68	s
Valencia	13	55	f
Vanc'ver	8	46	c
Venice	2	36	f
Vienna	-5	23	c
Warsaw	-11	12	s
Wash'ton	13	55	s
Wel'ngton	18	64	X
Zurich	0	32	f

Temperatures at midday local time on Wednesday. X = not available

NOON TODAY

Changes to the chart below from noon: low N will drift northeast and fill; low T is expected to lose its identity while low A fills in situ; low R should fill as it drifts northwest; high N will slowly decline

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	04.36	7.0	16.58	7.1
Aberdeen	04.14	4.0	16.25	4.0
Avonmouth	10.00	12.3	22.25	11.7
Belfast	01.50	3.3	14.08	3.5
Cardiff	09.46	11.4	22.11	10.9
Devonport	08.36	5.2	21.00	4.9
Dover	01 34	6.5	13.53	6.3
Dublin (N Wall)	*02.21*	*4.0*	*14.39*	*4.1*
Falmouth	08.07	5.0	20.31	4.7
Greenock	03.18	3.4	15.78	3.7
Harwich	02.23	3.9	14.45	3.9
Holyhead	01.09	5.3	13.19	5.3
Hull (Albert D)	09.14	8.2	21.24	8.1
Ilfracombe	08.45	8.6	21.10	8.1
King's Lynn	09.18	6.2	21.25	6.2
Leith	05.33	5.3	17.52	5.2
Liverpool	01.49	8.9	14.08	8.8
Lowestoft	00.00	2.5	12.42	2.4
Margate	02.39	4.6	15.06	4.6
Milford Haven	09.03	6.5	21.27	6.1
Newquay	07.57	6.5	20.22	6.2
Oban	08.10	3.7	20.48	3.4
Penzance	*07 24*	*5.3*	*19 46*	*5.0*
Portland	09.28	2.0	21.58	1.7
Portsmouth	01.57	4.5	14.09	4.4
Shoreham	01.42	6.0	13.55	5.9
Southampton	01.23	4.4	13 41	4.4
Swansea	09.01	8.9	21.25	8.5
Tees	06.30	5.1	18.46	5.1
Walton-on-N	02.16	4.0	14 41	4.0

Heights in metres.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Saunton Sands, Devon, 14C (57F); lowest day max: Buxton, Derbyshire, 5C (41F); highest rainfall: Folkestone, Kent, 1.26in; highest sunshine: Falmouth, Cornwall, 6.5hr.

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THE TIMES 2

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Richard Addis talks about his two years at the *Express*
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SPORT
Seizinger's winning streak brings her level with Killy
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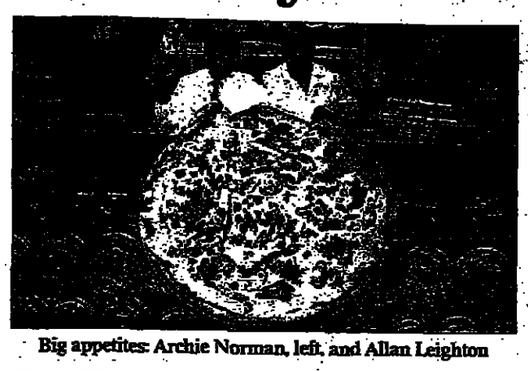
BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY DECEMBER 19 1997

Safeway bid rumours fanciful, says Asda chairman



Big appetites: Archie Norman, left, and Allan Leighton

By Carl Mortished

ARCHIE NORMAN, chairman of Asda, poured cold water on suggestions that the food retailer was plotting a bid for Safeway. "A lot of this speculation is fanciful," he said yesterday and indicated that no contact had taken place with Safeway since the exploratory merger talks were called off in September.

Mr Norman's attempt to quell City rumours came as the company reported a surge in sales for the half year to November 15. Turnover grew 8.9 per cent, far outstripping its bigger rivals, Tesco and Sainsbury. Profits before exceptional items were up 18.7 per cent to £190 million, including a £4.3 million contribution from Gazeley, Asda's property developing subsidiary.

City analysts were not entirely convinced by Mr Norman's comments on Safeway, noting that he had not completely ruled out the possibility of a bid. The food retail sector has been awash with rumours since Safeway approached Asda earlier this year to discuss the competition issues of the two companies coming together. Each group has about 11 per cent of the UK food retailing market and the addition of Safeway would provide Asda with better coverage in the South East.

Asda, whose chief executive is Allan Leighton, increased market share by a full percentage point to 11.6 per cent. Much of the growth came from hypermarkets, which now total 15 and which showed sales growth of 36 per cent. Mr Norman said the number of hypermarkets could double over the next two years. Capital expenditure for the full year is expected to be £490 million.

Asda's balance sheet gearing remains about 10 per cent but Mr Norman said the company had no plans to give capital back to shareholders: "I don't want to return capital and then go back to shareholders with a rights issue." However, he said: "A capital repayment in a year or two's time; that is a possibility."

Asda's gross margin remained flat during the year but Mr Norman said that there were signs that food price inflation could return next year. He said the company was committed to selling at a 5 per cent to 10 per cent discount to its rivals.

Asda is investing heavily in take-away food outlets at its major stores. The company boasts that it is Britain's biggest seller of Chinese, Indian and Pizza take-aways.

Asda's dividend for the half year is up 12.3 per cent to 0.91p and earnings before exceptionals of 4.86p are up almost 20 per cent.

Tempus, page 28

J P Morgan fined over price rigging

By Michael Clark, Stock Market Correspondent

THE London Stock Exchange (LSE) has imposed a £350,000 fine on JP Morgan, the US investment bank, after two traders attempted to manipulate the market in order to achieve a profit.

The traders, who were suspended after the incident last month, have now been dismissed by JP Morgan.

The fine is the first to be levied by the Exchange since 1995 and underlines the authority's determination to stamp out the practice of market manipulation. The last fine to be levied was for £150,000, against J & E Davy, the Irish broker.

In conjunction with its latest action, the Exchange has moved quickly to prevent further attempts at market manipulation, by beefing up the rules covering this area. Rule 2.10 originally precluded member firms trading in a security that is a component of any index from engaging in any action designed to move the actual index. This rule has now been widened to cover trading undertaken with the intention of moving the reference price of securities, or the level of an index.

The incident came to light on November 28, the day after the Thanksgiving Day holiday in the US, when the FTSE 100 Index suffered a marked fall, of 38 points, during the last few minutes of trading.

It later transpired that the two JP Morgan traders had gone into the market with the intention of selling small amounts of several leading shares, including SmithKline Beecham and Glaxo Wellcome, at artifically low prices. At the same time, they had sold baskets of FTSE options, moves that were also designed to depress the index.

The traders' actions succeeded in dragging the underlying securities, and the index, down. This needed to be achieved so that the traders could close down over-the-counter hedge options. The trigger for this exercise was the closing level of the index. The lower the index, the more profit they made for their clients.

Their actions were made possible by the introduction by the LSE of its Sets computerised trading system, designed to match buyers with sellers automatically.

Sets was designed to narrow the spread between bid and offer by increasing the flow of volume in equities through the market. This would increase price competitiveness, thereby narrowing the spread and providing cheaper prices for investors. The system was plagued by teething troubles and cold-shouldered by many brokers disgruntled by the absence of a central settlement system for all transactions. As a result, the volume of shares traded dropped dramatically, providing increased volatility in share prices.

The LSE has taken steps to rectify the shortcomings of Sets but has failed to convince agency brokers of its benefits.

Generale deal starts break-up of Hambros

By Jason Nissé

THE sale of the merchant banking side of Hambros for as much as £200 million could be announced in the next few weeks following the purchase of much of its corporate loan book by Generale Bank of Belgium for £30 million.

Generale is taking a portfolio of loans to 400 clients as well as 37 staff in the deal.

Société Générale, the French bank which recently hired Nicola Horlick to head its fund management side, and Investec, the South African finance group which is strengthening its presence in the UK, are leading the fight for Hambros Bank.

Senior sources say the deal could be completed within days, though it is most likely not to emerge until after the new year.

The deal will leave Hambros as a holding company for the group's 52 per cent stakes in Hambro Countrywide, the estate agency chain, and Hambros Insurance Services, as well as its 43 per cent holding in Hambros Guinness Flight, the fund manager.

The management, led by Sir Chips Keswick, is expected to then break up the group, returning shares and cash to investors in the most tax-efficient way possible.

In recent months Hambros has been wracked with scandal, largely because of its work for Andrew Regan, the young entrepreneur who attempted to put together a £1.2 billion bid for the Co-operative Wholesale Society. Revelations about the use of the confidential Co-op documents by the bid team led to the resignations of three Hambros directors, including its head of corporate finance, Nigel Pantling.

However, the bank still has a highly regarded private banking operation as well as a specialist bond dealing business.

Commentary, page 27

RAY BRADBURY

Peter Clowes on his way yesterday to appear before magistrates in Macclesfield

Clowes denies benefit charges

By Jon Ashworth

PETER CLOWES, former head of the Barlow Clowes investment empire, appeared before magistrates in Macclesfield, Cheshire, yesterday, charged with benefits fraud.

Mr Clowes, 55, of Stockport, Greater Manchester, denies two charges of false accounting relating to the submission of jobseeker's allowances forms in November last year. He was remanded on unconditional bail to appear before the court again on January 8.

Milton Firmin, Mr Clowes's solicitor, said after the hearing: "My client was building up a business, but the DSS appears to have thwarted his efforts. He will be pleading not guilty to the charges."

Barlow Clowes specialised in gilt-edged government securities. The company collapsed in May 1988 with losses of £190 million, prompting criticism of the Department of Trade and Industry, which licensed it.

Mr Clowes went into business in 1973 with Elizabeth Barlow. The company enjoyed success with a "bond washing" product, seeing funds under management grow from under £4 million in 1982 to more than £87 million in 1987.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5168.3	(-22.5)
Yield	3.15%	
FTSE All share	2417.28	(-9.78)
Nikkei	16161.84	(-379.42)
New York:		
Dow Jones	7926.57	(-30.84)*
S&P Composite	952.06	(-3.48)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 11/16%*	(5 7/8%)
Long Bond	102 25/32*	(101 21/32)
Yield	5.97%*	(6.01%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	7 3/8%	(7 3/8%)
Liffe long gilt future (Mar)	121 15/32	(121 13/32)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6637*	(1.6510)
London:		
$	1.6607	(1.6480)
DM	2.9436	(2.9163)
FFr	9.8554	(9.7847)
SFr	2.3852	(2.3636)
Yen	213.20	(209.53)
£ Index	104.1	(103.1)

DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.7765*	(1.7737)
FFr	5.9460*	(5.9400)
SFr	1.4388*	(1.4357)
Yen	128.55*	(127.08)
$ Index	107.9	(107.6)

Tokyo close Yen 127.35

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Mar) $17.70 ($17.50)

GOLD

London close $289.75 ($287.05)

* denotes midday trading price

Slowdown

Mortgage lending growth slowed rapidly in November, providing firm evidence that the five interest rate rises since the general election are beginning to take the heat out of the housing market.
Page 26

Plummet

Shares in Ferguson International fell from 130p to 91½p yesterday after the third profit warning from the paper and packaging group in six months and news that it will not pay a final dividend for the year to February 1998.
Page 27

Three founders of Levis ad group pocket £30m

By Chris Ayres

THE AGENCY responsible for creating the Levis jeans advertisements has been partly sold to a private US company, making an estimated £30 million for its three founders.

The deal, which has been in negotiations for about 8 months, will see up to 49 per cent of Bartle Bogle Hegarty sold to Leo Burnett, the advertising network. BBH is well known for the Levis advertisements, which have made one-hit wonders of rock bands featured in them and given old songs new life.

Burnett will benefit from the prestige of the UK agency — which has won several awards, including The Queen's Award for Export Achievement — and BBH will gain a worldwide presence. Burnett has 83 offices in 72 countries, employs 8,000 people and has billings of about £3.6 billion.

John Bartle, joint chief executive of BBH, would not confirm yesterday that £30 million would be the exact figure paid by Burnett for its stake, but acknowledged: "It's not a million miles away."

Mr Bartle said that although the leading shareholders in BBH were its three founders — himself, Nigel Bogle and John Hegarty — about 40 other staff would benefit. The agency will remain autonomous, he added. "We have signed a contract which says Burnett has a minority stake in perpetuity. There will be no exchange of people." The deal is likely to help BBH win the £48 million Levis's account in the US. The Soho-based agency currently works for the jeans company in Europe and Asia.

Boeing production lines out of control, says FAA

From Oliver August in New York

BOEING, the manufacturer of the majority of the world's civil aircraft, was warned by the Federal Aviation Authority, the US safety regulator, that its production lines were "out of control".

FAA inspectors have repeatedly written to Boeing over the past few months to complain that it was leaving too little time for safety checks. Boeing is currently expanding its production facilities after an order surge and the merger with McDonnell Douglas.

In October it had to stop production of its 737 and 747 planes after experiencing a string of problems. It now appears that the safety concerns were one of the reasons for the shutdown. At the time, the group was blaming shortage of labour and parts.

Boeing did not deny the FAA warnings, but played down their significance. A spokesman said: "The FAA is a really important part of our checks and balances system. We have not received any indication from the FAA that they are going to take any extraordinary measures."

An FAA inspector said in a memo that the rapid production increases "have created an environment that is out of control and the FAA cannot continue to support."

Boeing's inspection procedure was said to be "flawed" and the FAA was given "insufficient time" to test new designs.

Boeing experienced similar problems during an order surge in the 1980s.

The group hired an extra 17,000 people this year and said it will take a total $2.6 billion charge this year and next to pay for the delays.

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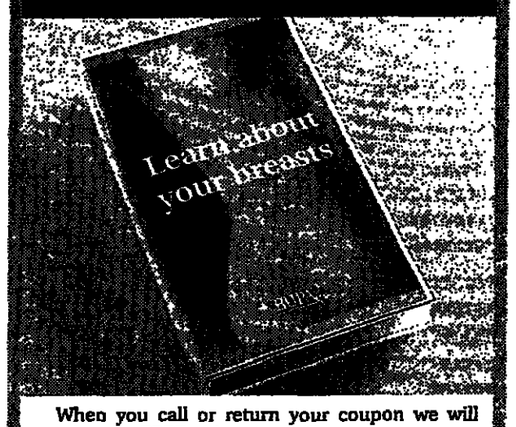

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US seeks $1m a day fine on Microsoft

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

THE US Justice Department has stepped up its fight against Microsoft's monopoly position in the computer sector. It has asked a federal judge to rule the software house in contempt of last week's court order forcing it to sell its Internet software separately from its *Windows 95* operating system.

The department also asked to have a $1 million (£598,000) per day fine imposed from the end of next week. In its latest trust-busting move, it alleged that marketing changes made by Microsoft were designed to sabotage the court ruling.

Microsoft was ordered to disentangle sales and marketing of *Windows 95* and its Internet Explorer to prevent it from dominating the Internet market. In response to this, Microsoft, which is headed by Bill Gates, is said to now force computer-makers to install versions of *Windows 95* that do not incorporate Internet Explorer.

Joel Klein, the assistant attorney-general for antitrust, said: "Microsoft has gone from tying its products to tying the hands of its vendors. The more Microsoft continues its practices, the more consumers are harmed."

The group said it did not recognise the Justice Department's case. The new call for the imposition of the fine marks a deterioration of relations between the group and the Government. Officials from several US states are said to have met in secret to discuss a suit based on the Justice Department case. Japan is also said to have begun to investigate Microsoft's market position.

Bill Gates faces the prospect of a federal judge ruling Microsoft in contempt of a court order forcing it to sell its Internet software as a separate item

Housing market starts to feel the effects of interest rate rises

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

MORTGAGE lending growth slowed rapidly in November, providing firm evidence that the five interest rate rises since the election are beginning to take the heat out of the housing market.

Figures released by the Buildings Societies Association showed mortgage lending falling 12 per cent in November, while separate British Bankers Association data also pointed to a slowdown. Signs of a slowdown in the housing market were also supported up by the latest housing price forecasts, which predict that growth is likely to be at around half the levels seen this year.

The Council of Mortgage Lenders said it expected house prices to rise by 5 to 6 per cent next year, although the number of transactions will also increase to 1.5 million.

Abbey National said it expected a period of "consolidation" in the market next year, with house price growth moderating from 9 per cent this year to 5 per cent in 1998.

The BSA said building society gross advances fell from £1.89 billion in October to £1.65 billion. Net advances also slipped from £985 million to £825 million, while approvals declined from £1.67 billion to £1.54 billion.

Savings data, however, was surprisingly strong in a month when consumers normally increase withdrawals in the run-up to Christmas. Savings inflows totalled £665 million — the largest November figure since 1988.

Adrian Coles, director-general of the BSA, said: "It appears there has been a slight cooling in the housing market recovery. This is likely to be a direct result of the five interest rate increases since the general election."

The BBA data also showed mortgage lending growth decreasing from £782 million to £690 million. Consumer credit slowed slightly from £536 to £526 million leaving total personal borrowing at £1.22 billion, down from £1.32 billion. Total lending, however, increased by £4.68 billion.

M4, the measure of broad money supply, also fell back in November, annual growth slipping to 10.5 per cent (10.7 per cent). Simon Briscoe, director of reserach at Nikko Europe, said: "There has now been a flux of data indications that economic activity is no longer accelerating." But economists also said that the Bank of England probably wants a further decelaration in the rate of M4, before ruling out further interest rate changes.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.61	2.44
Austria Sch	21.67	20.01
Belgium Fr	63.82	58.86
Canada $	2.485	2.297
Cyprus CypE	0.908	0.834
Denmark Kr	11.78	10.89
Finland Mk	9.42	8.67
France Fr	10.3	9.53
Germany Dm	3.10	2.85
Greece Dr	489	450
Hong Kong $	13.67	12.47
Iceland	130	110
Ireland Pt	1.19	1.10
Israel Shk	6.24	5.59
Italy Lira	3061	2824
Japan Yen	227.33	209.80
Malta	0.690	0.621
Netherlds Gld	3.502	3.207
New Zealand $	2.97	2.73
Norway Kr	12.61	11.67
Portugal Esc	313.03	291.00
S Africa Rd	8.76	7.80
Spain Pta	260.29	241.50
Sweden Kr	13.68	1.56
Switzerland Fr	2.53	2.31
Turkey Lira	340451	320573
USA $	1.784	1.621

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Consolidated code for Stock Exchange

BY GRAHAM SEARJEANT, FINANCIAL EDITOR

THE London Stock Exchange hopes to replace the Cadbury code rules on corporate governance next year. It will be superceded by a new consolidated code taking in revised versions of Cadbury and the recommendations of Sir Richard Greenbury's report on disclosure of executive pay.

At present, however, the Stock Exchange has no plans to enforce the new code. Like the Cadbury code, which covered such things as non-executive directors and audit committees, it will be appended to the exchange's listing rules and "sit alongside" them without being part of them. Quoted companies will be obliged to disclose in their annual reports how and whether they comply with the code's requirements. If they do not, they should also explain and justify how and why they have not complied.

The code will be the centrepeice of the final report of a committee headed by Sir Ronald Hampel, chairman of ICI, to review the earlier codes. The Hampel committee is due to report in January. Its proposed code will then be sent out for detailed consultation before replacing the Cadbury code. Sir Ronald's committee will only be reconvened if basic objections emerge.

Commentary, page 27

LMS wins permission for terminal

LONDON Merchant Securities, the property group, has won outline planning permission to build a cruise liner terminal, a hotel, a luxury block of flats and a cinema on an eight-acre site at Greenwich near the Millennium Dome.

The group is now working on detailed planning permission.

LMS yesterday reported a £69 million (£15 million) pretax profit for the six months to September 30, helped by a previously reported £51.9 million exceptional gain.

The ordinary half-year dividend rises from 0.8p to 0.9p. Total earnings rose from 4.05p to 28.29p.

Kodak plans to cut further 6,000 jobs

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

UNCERTAINTY over thousands of jobs at Kodak in the UK increased yesterday when the US photographic company added 6,000 to the 10,000 job cuts it announced last month. These come on top of existing programmes, taking the full cut of staff worldwide to 19,900 out of a 100,500 workforce.

Kodak employs 5,500 in the UK — mainly at manufacturing sites at Harrow, near London, Annesley in Nottinghamshire and Kirkby, near Liverpool. A spokeswoman said the company had "no details about what is happening in the UK".

Kodak is to take a $1.5 billion (£900 million) charge to fund the restructuring of its worldwide operations. Half of the cash will go on payments for those who lose their jobs; the other half will go on writing down assets and on efforts to reposition some of its businesses. Kodak is aiming to reduce costs by at least $1 billion (£600 million).

The company said that 9,400 jobs would be lost in manufacturing while 10,500 would go from administration, selling, service and photofinishing. Kodak UK said all operations were working on business plans for the company. These will form the basis of job reductions to be phased over the next two years.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Equitas takes over Lioncover liabilities

LIONCOVER INSURANCE, formed in 1987 to take on millions of pounds in liabilities from the PCW syndicates, has seen its liabilities transferred into Equitas, the company set up to reinsure and run-off 1992 and prior year losses at Lloyd's. The move, originally scheduled as part of last year's reconstruction and renewal programme, was blocked at the last minute by the Department of Trade and Industry. Lioncover was locked in various disputes at the time, which were largely resolved this year, and the DTI felt its trading position was far from clear.

Some 2,886 names on the PCW syndicates were hit by £135 million of losses after a series of irregulaties by PCW's agency directors, Peter Cameron-Webb and Peter Dixon. Lloyd's contributed £40 million to the PCW rescue and committed further funds from the central fund. By the end of 1996, losses born by the central fund had risen to £487 million. Equitas will assume full operational control of the run-off of Lioncover's liabilities. The premium for reinsuring the liabilities is £601 million.

Allied Colloids hits back

ALLIED COLLOIDS has accused Hercules, the American group bidding £1.1 billion, of using "thoroughly misleading arguments" in its attempt to win control of the chemicals company. Colloids said Hercules had resorted to inappropriate comparisons in an effort to portray its results as mediocre. It said its performance had significantly improved, that the fall in return on capital was because of investment in manufacturing, and that the US acquisition of CPS had brought major benefits.

CAT wins drug rights

CAMBRIDGE ANTIBODY TECHNOLOGY has gained the right to develop treatments for six more disease targets as part of an agreement with Icos Corporation, a Nasdaq-listed drug development company. Icos will contribute some intellectual property and will draw on CAT's expertise in antibody engineering. Separately, Icos will pay CAT for its help in developing two further undisclosed targets. CAT said this may lead to it receiving milestone payments and royalties.

Belhaven encouraged

BELHAVEN BREWERY raised pre-tax profits to £2.8 million, from £2.1 million, in the six months to September 30. Earnings rose from 7.8p to 9.7p and the half-year dividend rises from 1.9p to 2.1p. The group said that trading since September had seen a continuation of the positive trends in the first half of the year. It said that the results for the second half will be materially influenced by trading conditions during the festive season, adding that early sales have been encouraging.

Watmoughs attacks bid

WATMOUGHS, the printing group under fire from a £188 million bid by Quebecor, launched its defence campaign yesterday with a claim that its problems were behind it. Sir Derek Birkin, the chairman, said Watmoughs "is well positioned to generate increasing value for shareholders as an independent company". He added that the Quebecor offer "fundamentally undervalues" Watmoughs, shares in which fell 1½p to 270p yesterday, against the 257p bid price.

Warner Estate rises

WARNER ESTATE shares rose from 237½p to 247½p after the group raised pre-tax profits to £12.25 million (£10.1 million) and its net asset value to 308p (259p) a share. Earnings rose to 19.15p (15.92p), out of which a final dividend of 8.75p will be paid, taking the total for the year to 12.9p (12.2p). Rents receivable rose 12.9 per cent to £15.7 million. Philip Warner, chairman, said: "I am confident that the company's strategy of diversification will continue to provide good returns in the coming year."

Dragon sells US asset

DRAGON OIL has sold its remaining American offshore oil and gas-producing assets for $2.5 million (£1.49 million). Completion is expected shortly with an effective date of September 1, 1997. The assets, West Cameron 368 and Ship Shoal 222/225 offshore in the Gulf of Mexico, had attributable net reserves at the end of 1996 of about 400,000 barrels of oil equivalent. This compares with Dragon's estimated proven and probable reserves of more than 250 million barrels.

Recommended Offer

by

Merrill Lynch International

and

Deutsche Morgan Grenfell

on behalf of

Yule Catto & Co plc

(incorporated in England and Wales, number 98381)

to acquire the whole of the issued share capital of

Holliday Chemical Holdings PLC

Merrill Lynch International ("Merrill Lynch") and Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited ("Deutsche Morgan Grenfell") announce on behalf of Yule Catto & Co plc ("Yule Catto") that, by means of a formal offer document (the "Offer Document") dated and posted on 18 December 1997 and this advertisement, Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell are making an offer on behalf of Yule Catto to acquire all of the shares in Holliday Chemical Holdings PLC ("Holliday"). The full terms and conditions of the Offer (including details of the procedure for acceptance of the Offer) are set out in the Offer Document. Terms defined in the Listing Particulars dated 18 December 1997 in connection with the Offer have the same meanings in this advertisement. Merrill Lynch is also broker to Yule Catto and broker to the Offer.

A person who accepts the Offer will receive for each Holliday Share 105.3p in cash and 0.45 New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares.

Accepting Holliday Shareholders may elect under the Mix and Match Election, subject to availability, to vary the proportions in which they receive New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares and cash in respect of their holdings of Holliday Shares. To the extent that elections can be satisfied, Holliday Shareholders will receive New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares instead of cash and vice versa on the basis of a price of 306.5p per New Yule Catto Ordinary Share. Accepting Holliday Shareholders may also elect to receive £1 nominal of Guaranteed Loan Notes for every £1 of cash consideration which would otherwise be receivable by them under the basic Offer. The Guaranteed Loan Notes will be transferable but no application will be made for them to be listed or dealt on any stock exchange.

Irrevocable undertakings to accept the Offer have been given by Holliday directors in respect of shares representing, in aggregate, 18.0 per cent. of Holliday's issued share capital (including shares representing 17.7 per cent. of Holliday's issued share capital in respect of Dr. Michael Peagram's own beneficial interests and those of the trustees of a family trust settled by him). These irrevocable undertakings would cease to be binding if, inter alia, a person other than Yule Catto (or a subsidiary of Yule Catto) makes an offer for Holliday and announces acceptances of such offer amounting to not less than 32 per cent. of the issued share capital of Holliday.

The Offer is, by means of this advertisement, extended to all persons to whom the Offer Document may not be despatched and who hold, or who are entitled to have allotted to them, Holliday Shares. Such persons are informed that copies of the Offer Document, the Form of Acceptance and the Listing Particulars, which relate to the New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares to be issued in connection with the Offer, are available for collection from The Royal Bank of Scotland plc, Registrar's Department, New Issues Section, P.O. Box 633, 5-10 Great Tower Street, London EC3R 5ER.

The Offer will initially be open for acceptance until 3.00 p.m. on 8 January 1998.

The Offer is not being made, directly or indirectly, in or into the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan and none of the Offer Document, the Form of Acceptance or the Listing Particulars is being or may be mailed or otherwise distributed or sent in or into the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan. Further details relating to overseas Holliday Shareholders are set out at Appendix I to the Offer Document.

Neither the New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares nor the Guaranteed Loan Notes to be issued pursuant to the Offer have been, or will be, registered under the United States Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or under any relevant securities laws of any state or other jurisdiction of the United States or of Canada, Australia or Japan. Accordingly, unless an exemption under such Act or other laws is available, the New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares and the Guaranteed Loan Notes may not be offered, sold or delivered, directly or indirectly, in or into the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan.

This advertisement is not being published or otherwise distributed or sent in or into or from the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan. All persons reading this advertisement (including nominees, trustees and custodians) who would, or otherwise intend to, forward this advertisement, the Offer Document, the Form of Acceptance, the Listing Particulars or any related documents must not distribute or send them in, into or from the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan, and doing so may render invalid any related purported acceptance of the Offer.

The contents of this advertisement, which have been prepared by and are the sole responsibility of Yule Catto, have been approved by Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell (both regulated by The Securities and Futures Authority Limited) for the purposes of Section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986.

Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell are acting for Yule Catto and for no one else in connection with the Offer and will not be responsible to anyone other than Yule Catto for providing the protections afforded to customers of Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell or for giving advice in relation to the Offer.

The Directors of Yule Catto accept responsibility for the information contained in this advertisement. To the best of their knowledge and belief (having taken all reasonable care to ensure that such is the case), the information contained in this advertisement is in accordance with the facts and does not omit anything likely to affect the import of such information.

19 December 1997

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Breaching the banks of the City

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Morgan Grenfell, Kleinwort Benson, SG Warburg, Baring Brothers, Ackroyd & Smithers, de Zoete & Bevan, Rowe & Pitman, Wedd Durlacher, Hoare Govett, Smith New Court, Mullens, Phillips & Drew, Wood Mackenzie, Henry Ansbacher, Strauss Turnbull and — *in a few weeks'* time — Hambros. The City of London is no longer the preserve of the British.

The institutions that made the Square Mile great are now owned by Swiss, German, American or French financial conglomerates with a stomach for the sort of risks that made the London merchant banks the financiers of the world. And given the poor returns that most City merchant banks deliver, it is maybe better that the likes of Deutsche Bank or Merrill Lynch are tying up their balance sheets rather than NatWest or Barclays.

The passing of Hambros into the hands of Société Générale of France or Investec of South Africa may bring only a small tear to the eye. The gradual decline of the once *great* institution — a bank for 158 years and a public company for 85 years — has been hastened by the Co-op scandal, which showed a lack of judgement and a lack of supervision brought on by the lack of any decent business coming through the door. The merchant bank had become largely *irrelevent in the City, and has no* one but itself to blame.

Hambros has, in recent years, been an entrepreneurial bank in a way that went out of fashion perhaps a decade and a half ago. The bank was willing to put its money where its mouth was where it could see a pecuniary advantage. But it never had the balance *sheet strength to heck* the sort of deals delivered by Goldman Sachs or SBC Warburg, and it did not have the reputational strength of Lazard Brothers or Schroders which would bring the big deals without the balance sheet. Yet it could have had a role if it had concentrated on courting the sort of small and *medium sized* deal which is now bolstering the likes of Close Brothers, a bank that thrives on the scraps which fall from the dinner tables of its larger rivals.

Hambros' imminent passing, though, raises a question about the banks that remain. Lazards is almost certain to stay independent — its partnership with the two Lazards Frères in New York and Paris will ensure it need not go cap in hand to a larger bank. Schroders and NM Rothschild are in a different situation. Schroders' superb fund manage*ment side has put* a value on the firm which surely might tempt *Bruno Schroder to* cash in. And the need to build Schroders' New York operation or ditch it could bring the group closer to a US bank.

Rothschild carries on in its own sweet way. Like Hambros it is becoming more and more irrelevant. But unlike Hambros it is controlled by its chairman, *Sir Evelyn, not its shareholders.* But even Sir Evelyn must consider whether there is a future for a British owned merchant bank.

Santa: bring me a soft landing

Gordon Brown would probably require a series of consultative papers before accepting the existence of Father Christmas. But if the Chancellor did decide to post a Christmas wish list to Santa, you can be sure that his greatest *desire would be for a soft landing* for the economy next year.

The City *is typically split on* whether Brown has behaved well enough this year to receive his reward. Indeed, many economists believe that economic soft landings only take place in fairy tales and Brown is set for a rude awakening in 1998. However, if the Chancellor needed to look for some seasonal cheer in the rush *of the contradictory economic* data that has been emerging in the past few weeks, he could do worse than examine the housing market.

This year has been puncutured by occasional sitings of the return of the great housing bull market, such as broom cupboards in Central London going for a fortune. However, there has been little evidence to suggest that house prices are about to enter the boom-bust cycle which ultimately pushed two million households into negative equity in the early 1990s.

The latest data and *forecasts* are pointing with an unusual degree *of consistency towards* a much slower growth in house prices next year at around 5 to 6 per cent compared with up to 10 per cent in 1997. Even in the south, where prices are now only just short of their 1980s peak, analysts believe they are probably still around 10 per cent below fair values.

Other factors should also help tokeep the market in check next year. Mortgage interest rate relief is set to be whittled down further and ultimately abolished. Low inflation — even if it keeps a check on mortgage rates — also *makes gains* from *house* price rises seem less attractive, while too many people still clearly remember the bitter experience of negative equity.

This is not to say the market is in danger of collapsing. Most forecasts predict an improvement in transactions next year, as more prorperties come onto *the market,* and lending *should* enjoy another good year's growth in an increasinly competitive market. The housing market remains underpinned by some long-term structural trends — particularly a shortage of properties caused by a steady increase in the number of households. The housing market could be on *the verge of entering* the kind of era of sustainable growth that Brown must dream about.

Let sleeping fat cats lie

Sir Ronald Hampel's revising committee on corporate governance *has* long taken a *reductio ad tedium* approach. This consists of taking due time for deliberation, finally concluding that there is nothing radically new to say on the subject post Cadbury and Greenbury, that *thoughts need to* be refined rather than toughened up and, most sincerely of all folks, please let's have no more committees lest we all die of boredom.

And so say all of us, which is actually quite a triumph for Sir Ronald and his allies in boardrooms up and down Central London. The object of these *committees, after all,* was *not* to have any significant impact on business. It was to persuade governments, especially a potentially hostile Labour government, that something is being done. So ministers, rightly wary *of such a populist minefield, do* not have to undertake the impossible job of framing laws to curb *the excesses of corporate megalo*maniacs and their pet fat cats.

Subject to consultation next spring, the Hampel "supercode" will have no more exalted status than the Cadbury code it replaces. The Stock Exchange will append it to its listing rules, but not incorporate it in them. Enforcement therefore lies in the *hands of shareholders, who are* perennially inclined to make exceptions for just the sort of entrepreneurial heroes the code is intended to apply to.

This would surely not deter the Government from legislating. By contrast, the boredom factor looks a winner.

Losing friends

IT IS A strange irony that the more Dresdner Kleinwort Benson loses senior directors, the more money the German-owned merchant bank appears to make. *But after a year when it has lost* its two most prominent financiers — Simon Robertson and David Clementi — as well as the German whose increased role contributed to the departure of Robertson and Clementi, DKB is looking both careless and increasingly friendless.

Ferguson slides on payout and profits warning

By George Sivell

SHARES in Ferguson International fell from 130p to 91½p yesterday after another profit warning from the paper and packaging group and news that it will not pay a final dividend for the year to February 1998. The shares traded at a high of 428p in 1994.

An unchanged interim dividend of 4.5p was paid to shareholders on December 5. Last year, Ferguson, which makes labels for retail customers such as Safeway and C&A, paid an unchanged final dividend of 8.75p.

Stephen Gutteridge, who was appointed chief executive on October 1, has initiated another restructuring of the group, although the outcome of his review will not be announced until the final re*sults in May. The restructur*ing is likely to include disposals and more redundancies. Ferguson says it has had expressions of interest from third parties in various parts of its business.

Denis Cassidy, the chairman of Ferguson who was recently ousted as chairman of Liberty, has already indicated that he will step down from Ferguson. Yesterday, Ferguson *said he would retire* next year, when a successor would be appointed.

Yesterday, Ferguson said that 150 jobs would go in its food and textiles labelling division as part of cost cuts. *The measures will result in an* initial £2 million of annual cost savings for the company in the financial year to February 1999, said Mr Gutteridge.

He added: "The current drive to cut costs is only part of the overall plan to restore sales and profitability. There will be more cost savings to come and further redundancies are likely to follow."

The 10 per cent cut in the 1,500-strong labelling workforce will leave the group with around 2,000 staff. Apart from the core labelling activities, Ferguson owns Morplan, a fashion mail-order business, and two printing units. These account for £30 million-£35 million of annual sales.

Analysts had been expecting pre-tax profits of between £8.2 million and £8.4 million before exceptionals for 1997-98. They said forecasts are now likely to be pruned back to about £4 million for 1997-98.

At yesterday's price, Ferguson is valued at just £37 million. Mr Gutteridge, asked if he thought the group was now vulnerable to takeover, said it had always been a potential target given its management and trading troubles over the past few years.

Ferguson's current trading *position was "no reflection"* on Mr Cassidy's chairmanship or the time he had devoted to the shareholder campaign at Liberty, said Mr Gutteridge. He said the board had been "united behind" Mr Cassidy.

Tempus, page 28

Hartstone plunges further into red

By Chris Ayres

HARTSTONE, the troubled hosiery and leather goods company, plunged further into the red during the six months ending September 30, with pre-tax losses deepening from £2.1 million to £34.5 million.

The company said it had disposed of its loss-making businesses and would concentrate on Etienne Aigner in the US and Aznar in Spain.

Hartstone has closed the US operations of Michael Stevens, one of its leather goods businesses, and has scaled down and reorganised its UK leather operations. It has also sold Rubo Lederwaren, its leather goods business in Holland. This strategy is expected to release about £8 million in cash.

Shaun Dowling, chairman, said: "The directors will now review the options for realising proper value for shareholders from the remaining businesses." He said an extraordinary general meeting would be called to organise a share buyback *of 10 per cent of Hartstone's* equity.

The company's turnover fell 9.3 per cent during the period to £87 million, with losses per share deepening from 0.8p to 10.9p. An interim dividend of 0.16p will be paid on February 16.

MATTHEW POVER

Matthew Sharp, chief executive, left, and Keith Brown, director, of Creative Publishing, are optimistic on growth

Fine Art paints sharp contrasts

FINE ART Developments, the mail-order group that demerged its greeting card *division two months ago,* yesterday made an upbeat statement, while reporting further losses (Chris Ayres writes).

The company won some support in the City, its shares rising 5p to 168½p after having fallen 25p to 163½p since the *demerger. Fine Art said that* sales had risen 12 per cent at its home shopping division and improved at the fundraising division. However, the strength of sterling and strikes in France and Canada would cause overseas *sales to fall.*

Keith Chapman, chairman, said the group was set to grow organically and "if appropriate" by acquisition. Pre-tax losses for the six months to September 30 were £12.4 million (£5.2 million), with total *turnover falling* to £74 *million* (£77 million). Losses were 14.74p (4.33p) a share. An interim dividend of 3.9p (3.7p) will be paid on January 26.

Creative colours itself red

By Chris Ayres

CREATIVE PUBLISHING, the former greeting cards division of Fine Art Development whose shares plunged nearly 40p after its demerger, yesterday reported a dive into the red for the six months to September 30.

Pre-tax profits of £571,000 *turned into losses of £4.8* million. However, the company said much of the loss came from a one-off charge of £7 million for demerger costs. Shares in Creative rose 1½p to 145p.

Sales of Chistmas multipack products to national retailers were encouraging, the company said, and the overall business continued to show strong growth both in branded and own-label products.

Turnover rose by nearly 2 per cent, from £71 million to £72 million. Losses per share of 0.15p deepened to 6.69p, and no interim dividend will be paid.

Cadbury decision today on £420m deal

From Oliver August in New York

CADBURY SCHWEPPES, the drinks group, could decide today to spend around £420 million to buy two US bottling companies in an effort to catch up with Coca-Cola and Pepsi, its main competitors.

Beverage America of Michigan and Select Beverages of Illinois are part of the network of independent bottlers that processes 44 per cent of Cadbury's brands, including Dr Pepper and Seven Up.

Cadbury, which holds a regular board meeting today, is considering a move to build up its own US bottling network, similar to the networks of Coke and Pepsi affiliates.

A Cadbury spokeswoman said: "We want to support our *brands appropriately. A* consolidation process is taking place among the independent bottlers and we need to make sure that our brands and their route to market are protected."

Analysts said Cadbury would have to spend much more than the estimated $500 million (£300 million) for Bev*erage America and the* $200 million for Select Beverages. To build up its own network, even one considerably smaller than Coke's or Pepsi's, the group would have to invest several billion dollars.

Acquisition talks with the two bottlers are said to be at an advanced stage and an *announcement* could be made by the end of the month.

The bottling process is closely *linked to the distribution system* which has a big influence on the shelf placement of the drink brands. Cadbury could provide extra capital needed by the independents to compete with Coke's and Pepsi's more sophisticated systems.

Michael Smith, a Morgan Stanley analyst, said: "The rationale behind a purchase would be to help to provide capital to invest in cold distribution outlets like vending machines and to consolidate plants."

Tempus, page 28

Reg Vardy slows down

By Chris Ayres

REG VARDY, the motor distribution group, yesterday disappointed the City by reporting only a 7 per cent *rise* in pre-tax profits for the six months to October 31, from *£7.9 million to £8.4 million.* The company's shares fell 7p to 241½p.

The City has come to expect more rapid growth from the group, which is one of the few businesses of its kind to benefit from rationalisation in the car industry.

Peter Vardy, the chairman, said: "One analyst thought we would come in with more, but our reorganisation in Wolverhampton cost £400,000 and the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, cost us £600,000. That's a million pounds of non-recurring costs. When people understand that, the share price should start to rise."

The company, which has 51 dealerships, said it was on target to take vehicle sales for the full year to 100,000. It also hopes to build nine dealerships, for about £2.5 million each, before the year end. The expansion will be partly funded through borrowing — gearing is 8 per cent — and from the £27 million raised last year from a rights issue.

Turnover for the period was £410 million (£345 million) and earnings per share fell from 10.7p to 10.4p. An interim dividend of 2.8p, up from 2.6p, will be paid on April 30.

Tempus, page 28

AUCTION FOR SALE OF FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL VESSELS
(BULK CARRIERS THAT BELONGED TO LLOYD BRASILEIRO)
TO BE HELD ON
January 14th, 1998, at 3.00pm
Praia do Flamengo, 20 - Hotel Novo Mundo
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

VESSELS

DOCEDUNA - 63,718 dwt panamax gearless bulk carrier built 84 laid up in Rio de Janeiro since 1992. **DOCEMAR** - 75,455 dwt panamax gearless bulk carrier built 84 laid up in Rio de Janeiro since 1994. **DOCEPRAIA** - 51,504 dwt panamax gearless bulk carrier built 85 laid up in Rio de Janeiro since 1992. **RIO APA** - 45,384 dwt handy size craned bulk carrier built 84 laid up in Rio de Janeiro since 1994. **RIO ASSU** - 45,384 dwt handy size craned bulk carrier built 84 laid up in Rio de Janeiro since Jul 1997. **RIO COARI** - 51,501 dwt panamax gearless bulk carrier built 84 trading condition - presently in Singapore where she will be delivered. **RIO TEFE** - 53,022 dwt gearless bulk carrier built 88 laid up in Rio de Janeiro since 1996.

Informations and conditions available at the office of the AUCTIONEER JOÃO EMILIO DE O. FILHO
Rua Conde de Baependi, 26 - suite 108, Rio de Janeiro - Brazil
Tel. (55-21) 512-7070 / 239-0949 / 274-5988 - Fax. (55-21) 294-8884
jemilio@uninet.com.br
Full specifications available at our web site http://www.joaoemilio.com.br

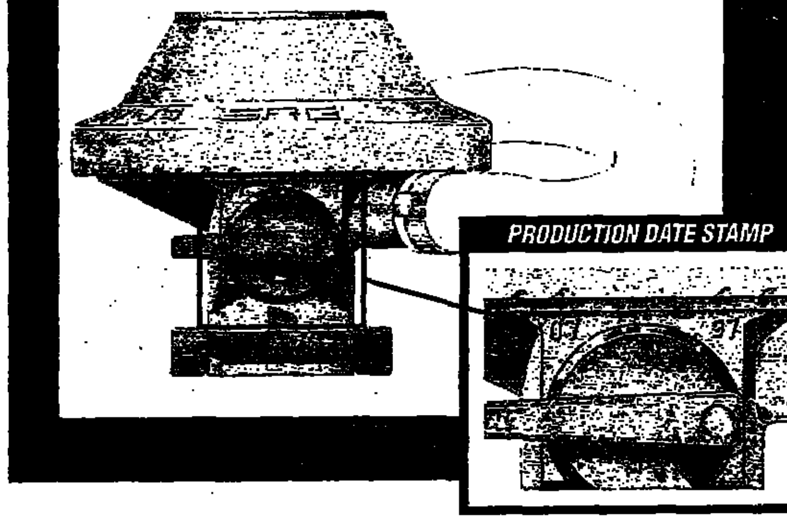
EURO PARTNER
400
On 6/7 February in Dortmund.
Information and catalogue:
Tel: +44-1203-69-4484 Fax: -5844
http://www.europartner-nrw.de

IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE

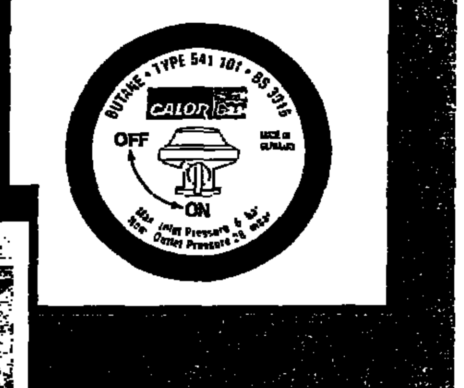
SRG 541.101 BUTANE REGULATOR PRODUCT RECALL

Evidence has come to light of a potential safety problem associated with the SRG Butane Regulator 541.101 manufactured by the German company, Schulz and Rackow between September 1996 and November 1997. A very small number of these regulators have been found to fail quality control checks which could result in gas escaping from this product.

CALOR GAS REGULATOR SRG 541.101



TOP VIEW OF REGULATOR



Please Check Your Regulator

The SRG 541.101 Regulator is the blue device that sits on top of a Butane gas cylinder and connects to the hose leading to an appliance. Appliances likely to have this regulator fitted to them are:- mobile heaters, barbecues and boats, camping and caravan appliances.

NOTE: This instruction excludes regulators factory fitted during this period to new Sabel Super Ser, Valor and DeLonghi mobile heaters. Also, SRG 541.101 regulators with a red dot on top of the regulator are excluded. These have all passed the manufacturers' quality control checks and are therefore not affected.

If you own a bottled gas appliance with one of the regulators illustrated above fitted to it we would ask you to take the following action:

Look at the diagram above. If the production date stamped on the regulator is between September 1996 (stamped 09.96) and November 1997 (stamped 11.97)

- ***Do not use your Gas Appliance.***
- Take the appliance complete with regulator to your authorised Calor retailer, who will fit a replacement regulator for you free of charge.
- If you are unable to do this, contact your retailer to arrange a visit to undertake this procedure, free of charge.

If you are unsure that your product may be affected or need help, please contact our free helpline:
0800 731 3826 or send off the coupon opposite.
No other SRG or Calor branded products are affected.
We would like to apologise for the inconvenience that this may cause to our customers.

Calor Gas Ltd, FREEPOST MID 02915, Athena Drive, Tachbrook Park, Warwick, CV34 6BR.

Please contact me regarding the SRG 541.101 butane regulator product recall.

Name ____________

Address ____________

____

____

Post Code ____________

Telephone No: ____________

Please send to FREEPOST address above.

CALOR Gas

STOCK MARKET MICHAEL CLARK

Stock Market Writer of the Year

Takeover talk fails to stop share prices sliding

INVESTORS spent a roller-coaster session with share prices closing lower on the day after failing to hold on to early gains. As if mimicking the Grand Old Duke of York, the FTSE 100 index raced almost 30 points higher in early trading fuelled by fresh takeover speculation that also succeeded in confounding the experts.

But the absence of any real commitment on the part of institutional investors meant that the advance was never likely to be consolidated. This proved to be the case with prices coming off quickly ahead of the start of trading on Wall Street where the Dow Jones industrial average opened sharply lower.

However, the FTSE index managed to close above its low for the day. At one stage it was nursing a loss of 42.3 before rallying to finish 22.5 down at 5,168.3. Turnover was a healthy 1.04 billion shares. Brokers said much of this was generated by year-end book squaring by fund managers and the covering of short positions by traders ahead of today's expiry of the options.

Safeway managed to sport a rise of 7½p at 336½p despite the indication from rival **Asda**, up 7½p at 178p, that it will not be reopening bid talks. Asda made its stance on the matter known after issuing half-year results at the top end of City expectations.

Asda has increased market share but continues to fall shy of its two biggest rivals, **J Sainsbury**, ½p firmer at 510p, and **Tesco**, 3p easier at 485p, who between them control more than 30 per cent of the grocery market.

Guardian Royal Exchange, up 16¾p at 340¾p, got the seal of approval from several brokers after its acquisition of PPP Healthcare this week. SBC Warburg Dillon Read has upgraded its recommendation from "reduce" to "hold", while HSBC James Capel has been keen to reiterate its "long-term buy" recommendation.

Not everyone was impressed with this week's trading statement from **Pearson**. Merrill Lynch, the broker, has moved to downgrade its earnings for the current year and the shares responded with a fall of 34p at 790p, making it the biggest faller among the top 100 companies.

Merrill says it remains a buyer of the stock. Earlier this week rival Smith Barney cut its profit forecast by almost 10 per cent to £320 million.

Frank Bruno and waxwork model at Madame Tussaud's, part of Pearson, which led falls in the top 100 companies

Positive comments from at least two brokers were good news for **Hays**, the employment and logistics group, where the price advanced 23p to 838p. Henderson Crosthwaite has raised its profit forecast for the current year by £7 million to £187 million, while NatWest Markets has decided to reiterate its recommendation to clients to "add" to their holdings.

An early start to the festive season by one senior executive at Abbott Laboratories is believed to have prompted a 67½p fall to 705p in **Shield Diagnostics**. Shield, which has developed a new technique for detecting coronary problems at an early stage, had been expected to sign a joint licensing agreement with the American group. But the absence of the key executive at Abbott means the deal has been put on the back burner until the new year.

Country Casuals has again been caught in the glare of the takeover spotlight, lifting the shares 31p to 122½p. Back in August its shares fell sharply after takeover talks with the group's former chief executive, Mark Bunce, were aborted.

A move by troubled **Dorling Kindersley** to cuts costs was rewarded with a rose of 9½p to 216p.

IMI benefited from a "buy" recommendation from Société Générale Strauss Turnbull with a rise of 12½p at 408½p. The broker has set a target price for the shares of 450p.

Positive news from **Nestor Healthcare** sent the shares racing away 16p to 193½p. The group, which provides temporary healthcare workers, says that results for the second half will be above management expectations.

News of the proposed share buyback provided a rise of 1½p to 102½p at **Pentland Group**. The footwear and leisure group is aiming to buy back 36 million shares.

Oasis Stores continued to reel from this week's profits warning with the price ending the session 7½p down at 122½p, stretching the deficit of the past two days to 63p.

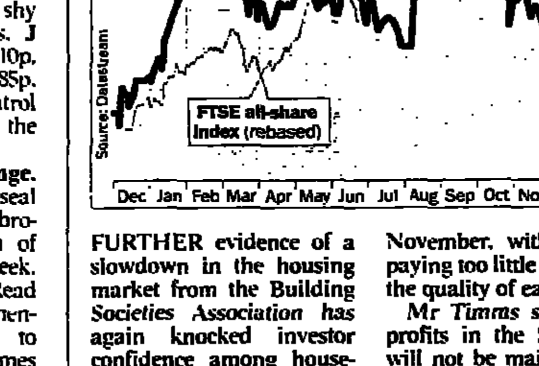
□ GILT-EDGED: Bond prices continued to make headway, reflecting similar gains on other European bond markets in the wake of the Bundesbank's decision to peg interest rates.

A positive start to trading by US Treasury bonds on the back of a better performance by the dollar against the yen also provided added stimulus.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt rose five ticks to £121¼ in thin trading.

Among conventional issues, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 finished £$^{13}/_{32}$ better at £121$^{7}/_{32}$, while at the shorter end Treasury 7 per cent 2002 put on a couple of ticks at £101$^{25}/_{32}$.

□ NEW YORK: The Dow Jones industrial average slipped more than 50 points in morning trading, prompting a second round of New York Stock Exchange program-trade curbs. The index was down 30.84 points to 7,926.57 at midday.



FURTHER evidence of a slowdown in the housing market from the Building Societies Association has again knocked investor confidence among housebuilders.

However, Charterhouse Tilney, the broker, says that investors should not be deterred and that there are plenty of opportunities in a heavily oversold sector.

Jonathan Timms, at Charterhouse, says that rising interest rates and news of a slowdown in housing reservations have taken their toll. The sector has fallen 13 per cent since November, with investors paying too little attention to the quality of earnings.

Mr Timms says: "High profits in the South East will not be maintained on new land purchases unless there is a further substantial lift in house prices. The repeatability of profits in the North is being overlooked."

Those tipped include Crest Nicholson, ½p lighter at 98½p, Countryside, unchanged at 100p, Beazer, steady at 162½p, Persimmon, down 4p at 190p, Wimpey, 1p up at 99p, and Redrow, 1p firmer at 141½p.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	7926.57 (-30.84)
S&P Composite	962.06 (-3.48)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	16161.64 (-370.42)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	10754.11 (+61.41)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index	907.53 (-7.23)

Sydney:

AO	2563.10 (+1.00)

Frankfurt:

DAX	4166.24 (+7.56)

Singapore:

Straits	1591.41 (+21.90)

Brussels:

General	14307.15 (+0.20)

Paris:

CAC-40	2894.50 (+1.25)

Zurich:

SKA Gen	1245.20 (+1.40)

London:

FT 30	3288.2 (+2.3)
FTSE 100	5168.3 (-22.5)
FTSE 250	4735.8 (-20.5)
FTSE 350	2477.4 (-10.8)
FTSE Eurotrack 100	2670.74 (+5.79)
FTSE All-Share	2417.28 (-9.78)
FTSE Non Financials	2418.21 (-8.33)
FTSE Fixed Interest	133.55 (-0.33)
FTSE Govt Secs	101.45 (+0.12)
Bargains	48362
SEAQ Volume	1041.0m
US$	1.6607 (+0.0150)
German Mark	2.9434 (+0.0269)
Exchange Index	104.1 (+1.0)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
ECU	1.4903
£SDR	1.2156
RPI	159.6 Nov (3.7%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	158.0 Nov (2.8%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Autologic	267½	...
BCO Technologies	158½	+ 8½
Boustead	20½	...
Bovis Homes	193½	+ ½
Capital Opps Tst	113½	...
Comland Comm	54	...
Energis (290)	266½	- 4
Flmg Geared Uts	179	...
General Inds	35½	...
Gooch & Housego	133½	+ 2
Manchester & Lon	270	...
Marchpole	116½	...
Market Link Publ	55	...
Northern Recrtmnt	138½	...
Property Asset	7	...
Range Cooker Cmpny	6½	...
Rapid Technology	94½	+ 2
Razorback Vehicles	102½	...
SCS Upholstery	111½	...
Saatchi & Saatchi	113	+ ½
Savoy Asset Mngmt	113½	...
Seascope Shipping	252½	...
Second Scot Zr Dv	99¼	...
Second Scottish	103½	+ ½
Symer	234	...
Terra	175½	...
Vanguard Med Wts	43½	+ 1

RIGHTS ISSUES

FI Group n/p (640)	238½	+ 43½
Taylor Nlsn n/p (60)	17¼	+ 1

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Danka Bs Sys	213p (+18½p)
Pressac	307p (+12p)
Royalblue	280p (+10½p)
Scot & New	785p (+27p)
BOC	987p (+32p)
Hays	838p (+23p)
Granada	921p (+20p)

FALLS:

First Tech	273p (-12½p)
Marks Spencer	574p (-6p)
BT	467p (-16p)
Scotia	345p (-10p)
Com Union	873p (-25p)
French Conn	390p (-10p)
Argos	555½p (-12p)
Northern Rock	546½p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 30

TEMPUS

Food for thought

SELLING with personality is part of the Asda mission statement and the group's chairman, Archie Norman, gave a shining example yesterday as he attempted to sell the notion that a merger with Safeway was yesterday's story. The City remains unconvinced, dazzled by the prospect of a food retailer with a sales clout that could rival Tesco.

There lies the problem. Sales growth at Asda is remarkable, outpacing Safeway and the imploding Kwik Save, but also showing a clean pair of heels to Tesco and Sainsbury. The company is stealing customers from rivals, enticing them in with cheap prices and take-away food. The gross margin remains a good two to three points below its rivals but faster sales growth is the compensation.

Asda could keep the engine racing for another two years but a bid for Safeway would change everything and probably lead to a price war. Safeway's prices are the highest in the sector and a shift to Asda's price range would provoke a vicious response from Tesco. Indeed, even a friendly merger between Asda and Safeway might prompt a hostile bid from Tesco, if only to spoil and delay with endless referrals to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Asda is bathing in sunshine with the prospect of food price inflation to reduce competitive pressures. Yet it has to look further than two years ahead, when land availability will constrain the expansion of its hypermarkets. If Asda is not to put its cash into banking or overseas ventures, it will face the choice of returning it to shareholders or buying Safeway. The bets are still on the latter but in the meantime it is the best buy in the sector.

Ferguson

FERGUSON International is in a mess and investors should clear out while they can. The company is beset not just by bad markets but by poor management. The cancelled dividend that accompanied the label maker's third profits warning in six months provides a clear message. Even yesterday's 27 per cent share price fall does not fully reflect its problems.

Put succinctly, Ferguson is doing a bad job in bad markets with too many people while haemorrhaging management and cash. Disruption caused by moving its food labelling operation to a new plant in North West London has led to serious quality problems, such as leaving bar codes off labels. Hardly the way to impress powerful customers. Ferguson is blaming the rest of the expected £10 million sales shortfall on a slowdown in clothing sales.

The merry-go-round continues at the top: Stephen Gutteridge is the third chief executive in two years. Meanwhile, poor working capital controls and heavy but questionable investment, including a plant in Sri Lanka, have led to a worrying cash outflow. Mr Gutteridge's solution is 150 redundancies, and he is threatening many more. Optimists might hope for a takeover to put Ferguson out of its misery, but pessimists fear competitors would be happy to see it go out of business. Investors should take what they can in the market rather than risk further disappointment.

Cadbury Schweppes

POOR old Cadbury-Schweppes looks as if it is being forced into the bottling business and there is a danger it may pay too much for the privilege. Cadbury owns 7-Up and Dr Pepper and once thought that owning brands was good enough. However, it appears that in America control of distribution is in the hands of bottlers. The two titans of the US soft drinks market, Coke and Pepsi, have strategic interests in bottling concerns, leaving Cadbury struggling with a disparate bunch of low-margin and inefficient independents.

Cadbury now seems to have resigned itself to throwing money at the problem. Two Mid-West bottlers are said to be on the block and logic would suggest a merger of the two. Cadbury has a strong interest in seeing such an outcome and ensuring that it is successful but the issue is price. Bottling is a cash-generative, low-margin and low-return business, ripe for the slash-and-burn treatment of a Wall Street venture capitalist. That, of course is the last thing Cadbury wants: the company's US soft drinks brands lost ground in the first half of the year, growing only 1 per cent. What Cadbury wants is a long-term investor that is prepared to spend money on building market share.

That points the finger at Cadbury itself, which has cash in the bank. Unfortunately, it may mean that Cadbury will have to pay a high price to keep out asset-strippers and slowly nurse the bottling businesses to health. Not an attractive prospect for a company that needs to show investors good figures short-term.

Reg Vardy

FLOGGING second-hand motors has never commanded much respect in the City. Reg Vardy admits that its average margins are between 1 and 2 per cent, a return that can quickly turn negative if the wind changes.

The City's deep suspicion of car traders was demonstrated yesterday, when Reg Vardy revealed a thumping rise in sales, a successful expansion strategy and a healthy rise in profits. The shares promptly fell 7p. A slowdown in growth disappointed, although Vardy said nearly £1 million had been lost through reorganisation in its Wolverhampton dealership and... the Diana effect. Fears of interest rate rises are also keeping the funds away.

But if you want to back a car dealer, Vardy is worth a look. As even stronger companies quit the sector and its domineering manufacturers, Vardy's market share and profits should grow. But beware: if the City continues to sniff at the shares, it could be a bumpy ride.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Dec	1072 SLR	Mar	1195-1193
Mar	1094-1094	May	1208 SLR
May	1116 SLR	Jul	1229-1224
Jul	1135 SLR	Sep	1250-1238
Sep	1152-1150		
Dec	1171-1170		Volume: 5135

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

Jan	unq	Sep	unq
Mar	1684-1680	Nov	—
May	1675-1672	Jan	—
Jul	1640 BID		Volume: 5455

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Oct	309.8-07.4
Spot 301.2		Dec	311.6-07.0
Mar	307.8-07.2	Mar	314.3-06.4
May	312.7-12.0	May	317.3-06.4
Aug	314.0-13.0		Volume: 2023

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on December 17

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB	67.23	96.76	92.66
(+/-)	+2.70	-7.66	-2.63
Eng/Wales	67.23	88.36	91.51
(+/-)	+2.70	-6.76	-0.91
(%)	+17.0	-39.0	-37.0
Scotland	unq	91.25	95.32
(+/-)	—	-10.00	-10.20
(%)	—	-28.0	-20.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	17.10	+0.10
Brent 15 day (Feb)	17.65	+0.15
Brent 15 day (Mar)	17.70	+0.10
W Texas Intermediate (Feb)	18.55	+0.15
W Texas Intermediate (Mar)	18.75	+0.15

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	175 (+2)	178 (+2)
Gasoil EEC	161 (n/c)	163 (n/c)
3.5 Fuel Oil	79 (n/c)	82 (n/c)
Naphtha	170 (+2)	172 (+2)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Jan	161.75-62.00	Apr	162.50-63.00
Feb	162.25-62.50	May	162.50-62.75
Mar	162.50-62.75		Vol: 10031

BRENT (6.00pm)

Feb	17.59-17.61	May	17.74-17.76
Mar	17.64-17.67	Jun	17.90-17.83
Apr	17.70-17.73		Vol: 16962

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Jan	81.25	Jan	74.60
Mar	83.75	Mar	77.40
May	85.75	May	78.25
Jul	87.75	Sep	77.75
Sep	80.65	Nov	79.75
Volume: 741		Volume: 79	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Mar	unq	91.0
Apr	112.5	111.0
May	unq	120.0
		Volume: 13

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/kg)

Jan 45.75-46.25

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Dec 97	unq	—	1272
Jan 98	1175	1170	1170
Feb 98	unq	—	1180
Apr 98	1280	1280	1280
Vol: 19 lots			Open Interest: 1679

Index 1261 -15

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE Rudolf Wolff

(Official) (Volume prev day)	Cash	3mth	Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1740.5-1741.5	1772.0-1773.0	1490900
Lead ($/tonne)	535.00-536.00	545.00-546.00	240000
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1117.0-1118.0	1140.0-1141.0	26931
Tin ($/tonne)	5385.0-5395.0	5340.0-5345.0	19185
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1500.5-1501.5	1526.5-1527.5	2821625
Nickel ($/tonne)	5870.0-5875.0	5975.0-5980.0	128220

LIFFE OPTIONS

	Series	Calls Jan	Apr	Jul	Puts Jan	Apr	Jul
ASDA	160	21	25	29	1	4	6
(*178)	180	8	13½	18	8	11½	14
Abbey Ntl	1050	98	122½	150	23	56	72½
(*1106½)	1100	56	96	124½	42½	80½	98
AlldLec	800	42½	66	83	19	35½	46½
(*820)	850	19½	42½	58	45	61½	72
Alld Dom	500	34	50½	63	8½	20½	27
(*522½)	550	9½	27	43	32	46	52½
BAA	500	21	41½	52	16	28	37
(*502)	550	4½	20½	31	50½	58	65½
BAT Ind	550	37	59	69½	16	39½	47
(*568)	600	14½	34½	47½	43½	68	75
Barclays	1600	123½	178	230	44½	86½	111
(*1677½)	1700	68	128	181	83	135½	160
Bass	900	55	95½	100½	14½	38½	45½
(*936)	950	25½	63½	73½	36	62½	68½
Boots	850	62½	96	111½	17½	29½	40
(*935)	900	34	68	23½	31½	51	62½
Br Airways	550	32	57	70½	15	30½	37½
(*564½)	600	10	34	47½	43½	55	62½
BP	800	45	73½	92	21½	41½	52
(*818)	850	20	51½	67½	47	67	79
Br Steel	130	11½	17½	20	3	6	10
(*132)	140	6	12	14½	8	11	15
C&W	500	49	67½	79	8½	21½	29
(*540½)	550	19½	41	52	27½	44	52
CU	850	62	94½	106	31	67	89
(*875)	900	37½	69½	81	56½	92	94½
Guinness	1400	75½	129	164	44½	89	107
(*1425)	1450	51	97½	139	62	113½	130
HSBC	1500	135½	207½	268½	64½	133½	156
(*1571)	1600	91	159½	210	113	185	209½
Halifax	750	30	53	71	15	30	43
(*762½)	800	9	30	48½	42½	67½	70½
ICI	900	68½	83½	114½	15½	42	56½
(*945½)	950	35½	62½	89½	34½	65½	80½
Land Sec	1000	44½	66½	77	29	45	56
(*1006)	1050	23½	43	53	58½	72	83
M&S	550	40	58	69	3½	20½	28½
(*579)	600	14	31½	43	32	41½	52½
Natl Pwr	550	52	74½	83½	8	21½	28
(*533)	600	21	47½	56½	26	42½	51½
Nat West	1050	75	107½	121½	35½	78½	86½
(*1078½)	1100	51	90	106½	61½	104	111½
Reuters	650	29½	56	68	19½	44	52
(*653½)	700	10	35	46½	50½	73	80
RylBkSc	600	49	62	72½	11½	40	48
(*621)	650	16	40	49½	44	67½	74½
Safeway	330	17½	30½	35	10½	19½	22
(*336)	360	7	19	24	27½	34	39½
Sainsbury	500	24	37½	52½	14½	23	32½
(*507½)	550	5½	20	29½	46½	52	60½
Shell	433	24½	—	—	11	—	—
(*446)	450	15½	—	—	18½	—	—
Smith Bch	625	35	62½	—	22	42	—
(*636½)	650	23	50½	70	34	54½	65
Stc Chr	650	59	78	104	23	43½	56
(*687)	700	32½	50	80	46	67	81
Thames W	500	30	59½	76	26½	42½	55
(*910½)	950	10½	37	53	58	70½	83½
Vodafone	420	30½	43	60	17	30	37
(*431)	460	13½	30½	41½	41	52	58½
Woolwich	300	30	36	43	3½	8	11½
(*326)	330	10½	18½	26	13½	20½	24½
Zeneca	2000	121½	183	244	43½	96	122
(*2075)	2100	66½	135½	192½	87½	143	170
Prudential	700	71	93	107	24	40½	51
(*742)	750	44	68	82½	46	65	73½
Rio Tinto	700	70½	82½	97	17½	37	48½
(*741½)	750	42½	55½	72	39	61½	71
Redland	330	15½	16½	16	½	6½	½
(*345½)	360	½	0½	½	16½	16½	16½
R-Royce	220	24	27	36½	7	11½	12½
(*237½)	240	13	20	26½	15½	20	27½
Tesco	460	37	50	60½	11	21½	29
(*483)	500	19	31½	40½	29½	41	47½
Utd Bsc	200	17	20½	24	5½	11	13
(*210½)	220	6½	10½	14½	14	22	24

	Series	Calls Feb	May	Aug	Puts Feb	May	Aug
BTR	180	12½	19	24	11	19½	20½
(*180)	200	5½	12	17	23	32	33½
Blue Cir	300	37½	44½	49	5½	12½	17
(*328)	330	19½	27	33	17	25½	31
Br Aero	1700	103½	158	203	69½	104½	129
(*1716½)	1800	61½	111	154	124	157½	180
Br Telcm	465	21	—	—	21½	—	—
(*467½)	515	5½	—	—	—	—	—
Cadbury	600	46	61	70½	12	28	32½
(*628)	650	19½	36½	45½	37	54	57½
Energy Gp	650	29	43	48½	14½	22½	29½
(*657½)	700	10	19	24½	48	52½	54
Gallaher	330	38½	44½	51	7½	15	17
(*357)	360	20	26½	33½	20	28½	31
GEC	330	21½	35	43	14	21	29½
(*396½)	420	9	21½	29½	31	37½	46½

	Series	Calls Feb	May	—	Puts Feb	May	—
Diageo PLC	550	58½	67½	—	9½	22	—
(*560½)	600	29½	40½	—	30	45½	—

	Series	Calls Feb	May	Aug	Puts Feb	May	Aug
[illegible]	550	49	63½	72	14	24	26½
(*587½)	600	23	38	36	38½	48	51
Hanson	280	18½	28	33½	11	18½	20½
(*282½)	300	10	19½	25	22½	29½	32
Imp Tob	390	24½	37½	43	10½	17½	23
(*400)	420	12½	25	28½	27	33	38½
Kingfshr	850	49½	70½	83	35	53½	66
(*851)	900	28½	49	65½	64½	86½	94½
Lasmo	260	21½	31	35	7½	13	14½
(*271½)	280	11½	22	25	16½	22½	24
Ladbroke	260	20½	30½	36	12	16½	20
(*270½)	280	11	21	27	24	27½	30
Lucas Var	200	14	23½	25½	8½	12	14½
(*205½)	220	6½	13½	16	17½	25	27½
P&O	650	56	69	75½	13	25	34
(*687)	700	26½	41½	51	34	47	58

	Series	Calls Mar	Jun	Sep	Puts Mar	Jun	Sep
BG PLC	283	23½	29½	—	16	26	—
(*285)	305	14	19½	—	27½	33	—
BSkyB	460	42	60½	70	30	38½	47½
(*470)	500	24½	42	52	52½	60½	65
Br Bio	100	20	27	32½	13	16½	20½
(*102)	110	15½	23	29	18½	21½	26
Centrica	90	8½	12	14	7½	9½	11
(*90)	100	4½	8½	10	13½	15½	17
Dixons	600	41½	64	75	34	45	55
(*604)	650	21½	42	53½	61	72	84
EMI	460	36½	52½	61½	32	41½	51
(*460½)	492	24	—	—	51½	—	—
Granada	900	49	77½	94	37½	47	57
(*914½)	950	30	53	69½	57	74	83
GUS	700	73½	91½	108	21½	25½	37½
(*744)	750	45½	64	82	42½	52	60½
Llyds TSB	750	62½	87½	105	45½	53½	62
(*756½)	800	46	63½	80½	71	79½	87½
Lonrho	90	9½	12½	14½	8	10½	13
(*91½)	100	5½	9	10½	14	16	19
Norwich	390	30½	37	46	17½	25	30
(*396½)	420	17	23½	32½	34	42	46½
Orange	260	20½	30	36½	14½	20½	32
(*262)	290	12	21	27	35	31½	33
Railtrack	900	103½	130½	148½	37½	50	64½
(*942½)	950	79½	108	124	58½	77	92
Scot Pwr	500	41	59½	68½	22	31½	39½
(*513½)	550	19	37	45	45½	53½	65
Tarmac	110	8½	11	12½	6	7½	9½
(*111)	120	4½	7	8½	12	13½	14½
Tomkins	280	27	36	40½	7½	12	18
(*298)	330	16½	25	29½	15½	21	27½
Unilever	500	37	46½	58	19½	30	36½
(*509½)	525	24½	34	—	32½	42½	—

December 18 Total: 23301 Calls: 11346 Puts: 11957

FTSE INDEX (*5167)

Strike	Calls Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jun	Puts Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jun
5000	175½	271½	365½	397	519	1½	72½	127½	171	252½
5050	131	234	331	365	—	2	55	143	190	—
5100	84½	197	297½	334½	457½	4	99	165	209½	290½
5150	44	167½	263	303½	—	13	120½	181	229	—
5200	14	135	226	273	393½	36½	142½	200	245	330½
5250	2	110	194	242½	—	67	156	224	270½	—
5300	1½	87	170	216	334	127	193½	253½	297½	376
5350	1½	69½	145½	196	—	167	232½	294	325½	—

December 18 Total: 4963 Calls: 3351 Puts: 1612 *Underlying security price

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Dec 97	120-17	120-24	120-17	120-24	166
Previous open interest 187379	Mar 98	121-05	121-14	121-00	121-09	34772
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Mar 98	104.32	104.78	104.32	104.72	89002
Previous open interest 250572	Jun 98				104.14	0
German Govt Bond (Bobl)	Mar 98	103.88	104.10	103.86	104.07	4672
Previous open interest 18032	Jun 98				103.49	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Mar 98	115.42	115.82	115.41	115.75	28921
Previous open interest 116980	Jun 98				115.19	0
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 98	129.75	129.92	129.75	129.87	1451
	Jun 98	129.39	129.39	129.38	129.3765	
Three Mth Sterling	Mar 98	92.37	92.38	92.36	92.36	10510
	Jun 98	92.47	92.49	92.45	92.46	9198
Previous open interest 675764	Sep 98	92.63	92.64	92.62	92.62	7901
Three Mth Euromark	Mar 98	96.16	96.21	96.16	96.20	36267
Previous open interest 1787467	Jun 98	95.97	96.04	95.97	96.03	38938
Three Mth Eurolira	Mar 98	94.61	94.69	94.61	94.68	18572
Previous open interest 540719	Jun 98	95.23	95.30	95.23	95.29	8418
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 98	98.26	98.29	98.22	98.26	4992
Previous open interest 126494	Jun 98	98.10	98.13	98.07	98.11	2363
Three Mth ECU	Mar 98	95.50	95.52	95.50	95.51	610
Previous open interest 32287	Jun 98	95.49	95.51	95.49	95.49	178
FTSE 100	Dec 97	5215.0	5236.0	5160.0	5178.0	16083
Previous open interest 70310	Mar 98	5270.0	5289.0	5211.0	5229.5	14314

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 7¼ Finance Hse 7¼
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 7⅛ Low 6¼ Week fixed: 7⅛
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 6$^{31}/_{32}$; 3 mth 6$^{31}/_{32}$. Sell: 2 mth 6¾; 3 mth: 6¾.

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis)	7⅛-7	7⅛-7	7⅛-7	7⅛-7	
Sterling Money Rates	7¼-7⅛	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼
Interbank	7¼-7⅛	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼

Overnight: open 7¼, close 7.

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Local Authority Deps	7¼	n/a	7⅜	7¼	7¼
Sterling CDs	7-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼
Dollar CDs	5.85	n/a	5.82	5.82	5.93
Building Society CDs	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar	5⅞-5¾	5⅞-5¾	5⅞-5¾	5⅞-5¾	5½-4¾
Deutschemark	3⅜-3¼	3½-3⅜	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	4-3
French Franc	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	3¾-3⅝	3½-2¾
Swiss Franc	1-¾	1½-1⅜	1½-1⅜	1½-1⅜	1½-¾
Yen	½-⅜	½-⅜	⅝-½	⅝-½	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $287.10-287.40 Close: $289.50-290.00 High: $290.30-290.80 Low: $286.60-287.10 AM: $287.05 PM: $290.00

Krugerrand: $294.00-296.00 (£179.00-181.00)

Platinum: $355.00 (£214.00) Silver: $6.00 (£3.605) Palladium: $190.00 (£114.50)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for Dec 18	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.3047-3.3197	3.3158-3.3194	1¼-1pr	3¼-3⅛pr
Brussels	60.470-60.790	60.665-60.785	22-17pr	62-55pr
Copenhagen	11.169-11.233	11.210-11.220	⅜-⅛pr	1-½pr
Dublin	1.1318-1.1453	1.1413-1.1438	14-7pr	50-43pr
Frankfurt	2.9312-2.9449	2.9419-2.9453	⅝-½pr	2⅛-2pr
Lisbon	299.66-301.29	300.84-301.14	⅛-½pr	½-¼pr
Madrid	248.18-249.44	249.11-249.34	61-51pr	181-162pr
Milan	2882.0-2892.9	2887.7-2891.9	40-24pr	121-99pr
Montreal	2.3489-2.3664	2.3641-2.3664	0.61-0.55pr	1.20-1.11pr
New York	1.6514-1.6612	1.6602-1.6612	0.723-0.697pr	0.728-0.697pr
Oslo	11.949-12.034	12.022-12.032	½-¼pr	1½-1pr
Paris	9.8130-9.8720	9.8500-9.8609	3½-3⅛pr	9⅞-9⅝pr
Stockholm	12.765-12.899	12.883-12.899	⅛-⅛pr	⅛-⅛pr
Tokyo	210.60-213.34	213.07-213.34	1½-1⅛pr	3¾-3⅜pr
Vienna	20.618-20.722	20.697-20.722	⅞-⅝pr	2½-1⅞pr
Zurich	2.3757-2.3895	2.3837-2.3868	1½-1⅛pr	3¾-3⅝pr

Source: Extel *Premium - pr. Discount - ds.*

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5110-1.5121
Austria	12.47-12.47
Belgium (Com)	36.57-36.58
Canada	1.4239-1.4244
Denmark	6.7492-6.7512
France	5.9355-5.9365
Germany	1.7726-1.7730
Hong Kong	7.7485-7.7495
Ireland	1.4515-1.4565
Italy	1738.70-1741.30
Japan	128.13-128.23
Malaysia	3.7840-3.7940
Netherlands	1.9971-1.9991
Norway	7.2417-7.2467
Portugal	181.27-181.32
Singapore	1.6680-1.6710
Spain	150.09-150.14
Sweden	7.7566-7.7616
Switzerland	1.4376-1.4381

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6585-1.6612
Australia dollar	2.5126-2.5160
Bahrain dinar	0.6150-0.6290
*Brazil real**	*1.8495-1.8539*
China yuan	13.516-13.816
Cyprus pound	0.8490-0.8680
Finland markka	8.7725-8.9135
Greece drachma	456.0-466.5
Hong Kong dollar	12.8493-12.8587
India rupee	n/a
Indonesia rupiah	n/a
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4970-0.5080
Malaysia ringgit	6.2750-6.2954
New Zealand dollar	2.8252-2.8293
Pakistan rupee	71.10 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.9375-6.0725
Singapore dollar	2.7662-2.7729
S Africa rand (com)	7.9230-8.0910
U A E dirham	5.9925-6.1285

*Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank*

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	1,800	Lloyds TSB	16,600
ASDA Gp	13,600	LucasVarity	5,800
Abbey Ntl	2,800	Marks Spr	8,300
Allnce & Leic	1,100	NatWst Bk	8,500
Allied Dom	2,200	Nat Grid	1,700
AB Foods	*1,000*	*Nat Power*	*3,400*
BAA	4,500	Next	3,100
BAT Inds	6,200	Nrwch Un	10,200
BG	12,500	Nycmd Amr	1,100
BOC	2,500	Orange	614
BP	10,000	P & O	3,500
BSkyB	7,500	Pearson	2,300
BTR	15,700	PowerGen	1,400
BT	19,300	Prudential	5,200
Bk of Scot	6,600	RMC	286
Barclays	4,500	Railtrack	4,800
Bass	*1,300*	*Rank Group*	*3,500*
Billiton	5,200	Reckitt Col	756
Blue Circle	5,500	Reed Intl	2,500
Boots	856	Rentokil	2,400
BAe	1,900	Reuters	1,700
BA	4,000	Rio Tinto	2,000
British Land	3,900	Rolls Royce	9,000
Brit Steel	8,000	Royal & Sun	3,200
Cable Wire	6,600	Ryl Bk Sct	14,000
Cadbury	4,900	Safeway	6,100
Carlton Cms	7,500	Sainsbury	5,500
Centrica	*12,700*	*Schroders*	*164*
Cm Union	763	Scot & New	1,300
Diageo	12,300	Scot Power	5,500
Dixons	3,100	Svrn Trent	749
EMI	3,700	Shell Trans	15,300
Energy Gp	3,600	Siebe	373
Enterpr Oil	1,200	SmKl Bch	15,300
GKN	493	Smiths Inds	673
GRE	11,100	Std Chartd	2,000
GUS	3,100	Sun Life	1,500
Gen Acc	994	TI Gp	2,300
Gen Elec	6,700	Tesco	6,200
Glaxo Well	9,500	Thames W	758
Granada	5,500	Tomkins	15,600
HSBC	3,100	Unilever	5,900
Halifax	3,800	Utd Utilities	1,800
Hays	1,400	Utd News	5,100
ICI	1,800	Vodafone	13,900
Kingfisher	2,900	Whitbread	835
LASMO	3,100	Williams	5,500
Ladbroke	7,800	Wolseley	408
Land Secs	1,100	Woolwich	8,900
Legal & Gn	1,700	Zeneca	3,000

WALL STREET

	Dec 18 midday	Dec 17 close
AMP Inc	41⅞	41⅞
AMR Corp	129⅜	130½
AT & T	58⅛	57⅞
Abbott Labs	66½	67½
Advanced Micro	18⅛	18⅞
Aetna Life	69⅞	78½
Ahmanson (HF)	65½	66⅛
Air Prod & Chem	76⅝	77
AirTouch Comm	39½	37⅝
Albertson's	46	46½
Alcan Alumnm	27½	27½
Allied Signal	36⅜	36⅞
Alum Co of Am	70⅛	71½
Amerada Hess	51⅛	51½
AEP	51½	50½
Amer Express	89⅞	89⅞
Amer Genl Corp	54⅛	55½
Amer Home Pr	74½	75½
Amer Intl	105⅞	105½
Amer Stores	20½	20⅞
Amer Standard	40	40½
Ameritech	83⅞	81½
Amgen	53⅞	53⅞
Amoco	84½	83⅞
Andrew Corp	23½	23½
Anheuser-Busch	43⅞	43⅞
Apple Computer	13⅛	13⅞
Archer Daniels	21⅛	21½
Armco	4⅞	4⅞
Armstrng Wrld	74⅛	74½
Asarco	22½	23⅛
Atl Richfield	78½	78½
Atmel Corp	19½	18⅞
Auto Data Pro	54½	55½
Avery Dennison	43½	42⅞
Avon Products	61	62
Baker Hughes	41⅞	41½
Baltim Gas & El	31⅞	31½
Banc One	55½	55⅞
BankAmerica	75½	75½
Bank of NY	58½	57⅞
Bankers Tr NY	121½	124⅞
Barnett Banks	73½	73⅛
Bausch & Lomb	39⅛	39⅞
Baxter Intl	49⅞	49⅞
Bectn Dickinsn	51½	50⅞
Bell Atlantic	90½	90⅛
BellSouth	56	55½
Black & Decker	39⅛	39½
Block (H&R)	44⅛	44½
Boeing	49⅞	50⅛
Boise Cascade	30	30½
Boston Scien	42½	43½
Bristol Myrs Sq	93½	94⅞
Browning Ferris	35⅞	36
Brunswick	28½	28⅞
Burlington Nthn	95⅛	94
CMS Energy Corp	40	39½
CPC Intl	107½	109½
CSX	54⅞	54⅞
CBS Corp	29⅛	29
Campbell Soup	57½	58⅛
Carolina Pwr	40⅞	40½
Case Corp	60⅞	61½
Caterpillar	48⅞	50⅞
Central & SW	26½	26½
Champion Intl	44½	45½
Chase Manhat	111⅛	112
Chevron Corp	75½	74½
Chrysler	36⅛	36⅞
Chubb Corp	77½	77⅞
Cigna Corp	161½	163½
Citicorp	130½	131½
Clorox	77⅞	78⅞
Coastal Corp	59⅞	60
Coca Cola	65½	65⅞
Coca Cola Ent	37⅛	33½
Colgate-Palm	67⅞	68½
Columbia Gas	76½	76½
ColumbiaHCA	28⅞	29⅞
Compaq Comp	54½	55⅛
Comp Ass Int	50⅞	51½
Conagra	38	38⅝
Cons Edison	40⅛	40⅛
Cons Nat Gas	57⅛	59½
Cooper Inds	49⅞	50⅞
Corestates	81⅛	81⅞
Corning Inc	37½	37½
C'wide Credit	41	40½
Crestar Finl	56	55⅞
Crown Cork	50⅛	50½
Dana Corp	46	45⅛
Dayton Hudson	67½	67
Deere	56	56½
Delta Air Lines	116⅞	117⅛
Deluxe Corp	36½	36⅞
Digital Equip	37⅛	38½
Dillard Dept St	35½	35⅞
Disney (Walt)	97⅛	96⅞
Dominion Res	40½	40½
Donelley (RR)	37	37½
Dover Corp	34⅞	34½
Dow Chemical	98	99½
Dow Jones	55½	55½
Dresser	41	40⅞
Duke Power	53⅞	53⅞
Dun & Brdstreet	30⅛	29½
Du Pont	61	61
Eastman Chem	58⅛	57½
Eastman Kodak	59⅛	59½
Eaton Corp	92	92⅛
Edison Int	26½	26½
Elect Data Sys	42⅞	43
Emerson Elec	56⅞	56½
Engelhard Corp	18½	19½
Enron Corp	39⅞	39⅞
Entergy	27⅞	27½
Ethyl Corp	8	7½
Exxon	63⅛	62½
FMC Corp	64⅞	64½
FPL Group	57½	57½
Federal Express	58⅛	60½
Fifth Third Banc	80½	81
Fleet Finl Grp	73½	73⅞
Fluor Corp	39½	39⅞
Ford Motor	48½	48⅞
Fort James	38½	39
Fortune Brands	36½	36½
Franklin Res	90⅞	91½
GTE Corp	50½	50½
Gannett	59½	60⅛
Gap Inc Del	54½	54⅞
Gateway 2000	30⅛	29⅞
Gen Dynamics	85⅞	86⅞
Gen Electric	74⅞	75½
Gen Mills	74⅞	75⅛
Gen Motors	64⅛	64⅞
Gen Reinsurance	213⅞	216½
Gen Signal	41⅞	41½
Genuine Parts	32½	33
Georgia Pac	61½	63
Gillette	99⅞	101½
Glaxo Welc ADR	47½	47⅞
Goodrich (BF)	42½	43½
Goodyear Tire	64½	64⅞
Great Lakes	44⅛	44½
Halliburton	50½	50½
Harcourt General	53½	53⅞
Heinz (HJ)	52½	53
Hercules	48⅞	49
Hershey Foods	61½	61⅞
Hewlett Packard	63⅞	63½
Hilton Hotels	27½	29½
Home Depot	58½	58⅞
Homestake Mng	10½	10½
Honeywell	66⅞	67
Household Intl	122½	127⅛
Houston Inds	25½	25½
Humana	20⅛	20½
ITT Corp	80½	79⅞
Ikon Office	26½	27½
Illinois Tool	57½	57½
Illinova	24⅞	25
INCO	18⅛	18½
Ingersoll Rand	40½	40⅞
Inland Steel	17⅛	17
Intel Corp	68⅞	69½
IBM	102⅞	102
Intl Flav & Fr	49½	49½
Intl Paper	43½	44½
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	66⅞	66½
Kellogg	49½	49⅞
Kerr-McGee	64	63½
Kimberly-Clark	48½	48⅞
Kmart	11½	11½
Knight-Ridder	52⅞	52½
Lilly (Eli)	67	67½
Limited Inc	24½	24⅞
Lincoln Nat	76½	74½
Litton	56½	54½
Liz Claiborne	42½	42
Lockheed Martin	95⅞	96½
Louisiana Pac	18⅞	18⅞
MCI Comm	44½	44½
Manpower Inc	33½	33⅞
Marriott Int	68⅞	68
Marsh & McLnn	74½	74⅞
Masco Corp	51½	52½
May Dept St	52½	52½
Maytag Corp	36⅞	37½
McDonalds	45½	45½
McGraw Hill	72½	72½
Mead Corp	28⅞	28⅞
Medtrust Corp	39½	39½
Medtronic	51⅞	51⅞
Mellon Bk	60⅞	60⅞
Merck Inc	106½	107⅞
Mercury Fin	0½	0½
Merrill Lynch	71⅞	72
Microsoft	132⅞	135½
Minnesota Mine	87	84½
Mirage Resorts	21½	20½
Mobil Corp	71⅞	72
Monsanto	42⅞	43
Morgan (JP)	120⅞	123
Motorola Inc	55½	54½
Mylan Labs	20½	20½
Natl Semi	25⅞	26½
Natl Service Ind	46½	46½
Navistar Int	24½	24½
NY Times A	66½	65⅞
Newmont Mng	30½	29⅞
Nike B	42½	43⅞
NL Industries	13½	13½
Nordstrom	56½	55½
Norfolk Sthrn	30⅞	31½
Nthn State Pwr	56⅞	56½
Norwest Corp	37½	37½
Occidental Pet	29½	29½
Oracle	22⅞	22½
Oryx Energy Co	24½	24½
Owens Corning	35⅛	35½
PPG Industries	58⅛	57½
PMI Group	70½	71½
PNC Bank	57	58
PP&L Res	22½	22½
Paccar Inc	53½	54½
Pacificorp	24⅞	24⅞
Pac Enterprises	36⅞	35½
Pall Corp	21½	21½
Parker Hannifin	44½	44½
Peco Energy	23⅛	23½
Penney (JC)	62½	63½
Pennzoil	67½	66⅞
Pepsico	34⅛	34⅞
Pfizer	75½	75½
Pharm & Upjhn	36⅛	35⅞
Phelps Dodge	63	64⅛
Philip Morris	44½	44⅞
Phillips Pet	47½	47½
Pitney Bowes	89⅞	90⅛
Polaroid	44½	44⅛
Procter & Gmbl	80⅞	81½
Providian	44½	45
Pub Serv E & G	29½	29⅞
Quaker Oats	52⅞	53½
Ralston Purina	93½	94½
Raychem Corp	41	45⅞
Raytheon	56½	56½
Reebok Intl	31½	31½
Reliastar Fin	38⅞	38⅞
Reynolds Metals	61⅛	61⅛
Rockwell Intl	52⅛	52½
Rohm & Haas	90½	92⅛
Royal Dutch	55½	54⅞
Rubbermaid	24½	24
SBC Comms	79⅛	75⅛
Safeco Corp	49⅛	49⅛
St Paul's Cos	83½	81⅞
Sara Lee Corp	55⅛	54½
Schering Plough	61½	60½
Schlumberger	78½	78⅛
Seagram	31⅞	31½
Sears Roebuck	43½	44⅛
Shell Trans	44⅛	45⅛
Sherwin Wllms	25⅛	28½
Silicon Graphics	12½	13½
Snap-On-Tools	44⅛	45½
Southern Co	25⅛	25⅞
Southtrust	60½	60⅛
Sprint Corp	56½	57½
Stanley Works	44½	44½
Sun Company	42½	42⅞
Sun Microsys	36½	37⅞
Suntrust	73⅞	72½
Supervalu	40⅞	40½
Synovus Fin	32½	32⅞
Sysco Corp	45½	45½
TRW Inc	53½	54½
TJC Hldgs	32⅛	32½
Tandy Corp	38⅛	39⅞
Temple Inland	53½	53½
Tenet Healthcare	32	33½
Tenneco	38⅞	38½
Texaco	53½	53
Texas Inst	43½	43½
Texas Utilities	40½	40⅞
Textron	60⅛	61½
Thermo Elect	38½	38½
Time Warner	60½	60½
Times-Mirror A	61½	61⅛
Timken	34½	34½
Torchmark	41½	42½
Toys R Us	30½	31½
Transamerica	112½	112½
Travelers	55½	55⅞
Tribune	60½	60⅞
UST Inc	35½	35½
US Bancorp	114½	114½
UAL	90½	90½
Unifirin	65	66
US Inds	28½	28½
US West Comm	45½	45½
US West Media	28½	28½
USAirways Group	61½	61½
USX Marathon	33½	33½
Unicom	30½	30½
Unilever NV	61⅞	61⅞
Union Camp	52½	53½
Union Carbide	45	44½
Union Pacific	61½	61⅞
Unisys Corp	12½	12⅞
USF&G Corp	22½	22½
United Tech	71⅞	73½
Unocal Corp	38⅛	39
VF Corp	45⅞	46½
Wal-Mart Stores	39½	40⅞
Warner-Lambert	114½	117½
Waste Mngmnt	27½	28½
Wells Fargo	337⅛	330½
Weyerhaeuser	48½	48½
Whirlpool	56½	56½
Whitman	25⅞	25½
Winn Dixie	42½	43½
Witco Corp	41⅛	41
Woolworth	20½	21½
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	78½	79⅞
Xerox	69⅞	71½
Xilinx Inc	34	34⅞

هكذا من الإصل

Brown's busy squirrelling may invite a bleak early winter

As 'inflation nutters' go, the Chancellor could be the biggest of them all

Gordon Brown was clapped into the Treasury on May 2 on a ticket of radical supply side change to the labour market and the welfare state

Gordon Brown's testimony to the Treasury Select Committee this week was a revelation. For more than two hours, the Chancellor was buffeted by MPs on all sides of the political divide. He was pronounced guilty of dangerous social engineering for cutting benefits to lone mothers, accused of penalising prudent savers by planning an upper limit on Individual Saving Accounts (ISAs), lambasted for letting down pensioners, called to account for failing to publish comprehensive public spending tables in the *Pre-Budget Report*, goaded for taking an unduly pessimistic view of public finances and blamed for sterling's strength.

But, whatever the line of attack, Mr Brown hammered home the same message with awesome consistency. What the country needs, beyond all else, is stability with low inflation. Pensioners should not be unduly worried that rising council tax bills are set to dwarf their winter-warmer payments. What they need is a "stable economy with low inflation". Exporters are understandably worried about the strength of the pound but what really matters is that sterling is helping to control inflation. Stability is the most important thing for the unemployed. Companies will not invest if they feel that inflation is getting out of control.

The thought suddenly occurred that Mr Brown's decision to hand over power to set interest rates to the inflation nutters at the Bank of England may have been utterly inspired. It may have saved us from the greatest inflation nutter of them all.

Mr Brown is a man possessed by old Labour demons. He, like so many other politicians and economists of this generation, is obsessed with the economic mismanagement of the 1980s, when the strength of growth was woefully underestimated, the Government pumped up demand for electoral reasons, inflation exploded and bust followed. As if this horror was not enough to keep the Chancellor awake at night, he is desperately hung up on old Labour's reputation as the party that spent and taxed its way out of trouble.

At the Treasury Select Committee this week, Mr Brown was quietly and firmly taken to task by Ruth Kelly, Labour MP for Bolton West, who has the unique vantage point of having come to the Commons from the Bank of England. Her point was that the Chancellor appeared to have adopted the most pessimistic assumptions possible on the public finances. She noted that the Chancellor's fiscal arithmetic was based on the assumption that the sustainable growth rate of the economy is 2.25 per cent, a low figure given that growth has averaged 2.5 per cent over the past 50 years. She asked why the Chancellor was not taking into account the considerable, temporary inflows to the Exchequer from the abolition of advance corporation tax (ACT), why the Treasury was assuming a long-term downtrend in VAT receipts and whether it was realistic to expect no privatisation proceeds at all. The probability that all these would turn out at the pessimistic end of realistic expectations was, Ms Kelly, extremely unlikely.

Mr Brown seems intent on pursuing an ultra-cautious line on fiscal policy and, in his *Pre-Budget Report*, seemed to be goading the Bank of England to do the same on monetary policy. Whereas the Bank is looking for inflation to fall throughout next year, the Treasury is forecasting a rise, despite expectations of a sharp slowdown in domestic growth and a chill, deflationary wind blowing in from Asia.

The conviction in the City is that the Chancellor wants the impending economic slowdown out of the way as soon as possible, exacerbated if necessary by maintaining an unnecessarily tight squeeze on public spending (perhaps, if he is not careful, even to the point of recession if Asia has a large impact), so that the economy is growing and Treasury coffers flowing when Labour sets about trying to win a second term. This may be unfair cynicism. It may be that the Chancellor's demons have genuinely got the better of him. Whatever the truth of his thinking, excessive prudence has its dangers, not least to his own long-term programme of microeconomic reform. Seeking further improvement to the supply side of the economy, to ensure that the economy can deliver more growth and jobs in the future, is an admirable aim but, if the macroeconomy lets him down, Mr Brown will fail.

Above all, he needs the economy to enjoy a soft landing. The Chancellor told the Select Committee that low inflation was the most important ingredient for those seeking jobs and wondering whether to invest — but economic growth is the prerequisite for both. Companies do not invest because of low inflation but because they see demand ahead. They employ people for the same reason.

Introducing ISA: Geoffrey Robinson at the unveiling

Mr Brown is, of course, set on being powerless to determine whether the economy's landing is hard or soft. He has voluntarily strapped himself into a Conservative straitjacket on fiscal policy (and means to hamstring himself in the longer-term through his fiscal responsibility code) and handed monetary policy to the Bank. It may come as a relief to some that politicians cannot entirely have their wicked way with the economic cycle but the thought that we have never been so dependent on the good sense of a group of academic economists sitting in Threadneedle Street does make one a little queasy. Mr Brown's determination to have nothing to do with running macroeconomic policy is a big gamble and one that defines his Chancellorship so far. It may be proved foolhardy but it is, without doubt, definite. It is also a very different type of inactivity to the sort employed by Kenneth Clarke, who put the macroeconomy on cruise control, when it needed nothing else, and left the microeconomy alone in the dog days of a Government that had no policy ideas left and no will to think up new ones.

Mr Brown's people may not be running the economy but they are feverishly busy. Their belief, long before they were clapped into the Treasury on May 2, was that a well-managed macroeconomic policy was the bare minimum for a reforming government and should take up as little time as possible. They argued that they would stand or fall on whether they could push through radical supply side change to the labour market and to the welfare state.

How much is actually getting done is extremely difficult to tell and we will have to wait for the findings of various reviews and special committees but, before they report, a definite pattern of priorities has emerged. Even within the existing control total, Mr Brown has shown that he means to redistribute public spending to priority areas. The lone mothers episode is only the first skirmish in a drive to save money on benefits (permanent savings if more return to the labour force) and rechannel it into education, education, education.

Perhaps more surprisingly, the Chancellor is not averse to old-fashioned income redistribution, a fact that ought to cheer some of those critics from the left who voted against the Government last week. For all the public relations incompetence of the launch of ISAs, led by Geoffrey Robinson, the beleaguered Paymaster General (and, of course, the breach of trust with existing savers). Mr Brown is perfectly within his rights to decide that the Government has better things to spend its money on than tax relief for top rate taxpayers.

Mr Brown's team has admirable conviction and vigour but the ISA episode offers warning signals. For a Chancellor committed to long-term structural reform, the new policy seemed to be hopelessly short on detail (even as a consultative document) and its launch almost farcical, with nobody able to answer detailed questions.

It makes one wonder whether policy making has become too centralised in Mr Brown's office of special advisers or, on the other hand, contracted out to the great and good of the private sector, who may be bright and able but do have their hands full running large businesses. It also begs the question whether the detailed technical knowledge of Treasury civil servants is being mobilised as it should be.

Despite Mr Brown's oft-repeated desire for more open government, there is a closed-minded streak, a "you are either with us or against us" mentality that sometimes borders on paranoia. Given that this Chancellor is so keen to consult widely, this attitude cannot be healthy for the success of his programme.

Accountants seek theme to symbolise their union

Jon Ashworth reads the runes for KPMG and Ernst & Young

Not the artist formerly known as Prince, so much as the accountancy firm formally known as KPMG and Ernst & Young. This time next year, two of the oldest names in accounting could have disappeared — replaced by a symbol, instantly recognisable anywhere in the world. Sir Tim Bell, one-time adviser to Baroness Thatcher, has been asked to devise an emblem.

Crafting KPMG and Ernst & Young into a universally acceptable symbol or name is but one of the challenges thrown up by the proposed merger of the two firms — if it goes ahead. Regulators in Washington and Brussels are deliberating whether the concentration of power in professional services has already gone far enough. Approval could follow next summer, with implementation by October 1.

Colin Sharman, KPMG's UK senior partner, and proposed chairman of the international firm, concedes that the fate of the deal rests with the competition authorities. The same is true of Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand — pursuing their own merger.

Sharman is confident of winning the regulators over. "We're confident that we can persuade them that not only is this necessary for us to be able to continue to be effective in the market place, but also that the worries which were expressed in certain narrow sectors of the market about reductions in competition are unfounded, and should not be allowed to prevent the merger taking place."

Sharman: confident

UK finance directors — notably at British Airways, Rentokil Initial, Bass and National Power — have expressed disquiet at the proposed deals. They say the shift from six firms to four — or even three, if Arthur Andersen were to link with Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu — has worrying implications. Fees could be forced up, and choice reduced.

Not so, insists Sharman, who says the "noise level" surrounding the merger is largely a UK phenomenon. "We have to persuade people that what we're doing is sensible, and is something which is not going to destroy competition. I think all the evidence is that it isn't."

He points to the last round of consolidation in the industry, which saw the Big Eight become the Big Six. "There is absolutely no evidence whatsoever that the reduction from eight to six either reduced competition or resulted in an increase in fee levels. Exactly the opposite appears to have happened. Audit fees in real terms have been falling. Profits and turnovers of the FTSE-100 have been increasing. Secondly, most tenders usually come down to three people anyway."

KPMG and Ernst & Young have drafted a global merger agreement, setting out the terms of the merger, and creating the new entity. The document lays down the structure, including a new international board, and establishes the ground rules for selecting a new name. It establishes an eight-member joint steering committee to oversee the implementation of the merger.

With this in place, Sharman and his counterparts are free to press ahead with their preparations.

The case for the merger is forcefully argued. Sharman says: "You have to look at what is happening in the global market place. The consolidation in things like financial services is creating huge entities which we have to audit. Look at the potential scale of the United Bank of Switzerland. How the hell are you going to audit that if you're not big?"

The theme runs through the submissions to regulators. Money saved by pooling resources will be pumped into emerging economies. KPMG and Ernst & Young each spend about $70 million a year on international development. Pooling resources on technology and new services could perhaps free $75 million a year for investment in emerging markets. Hence the need for a new name — in the shape of a global symbol. As Sharman puts it: "We haven't really changed the way in which we deliver services for a hundred years. We're about to — dramatically. For a hundred years, we've delivered our services on paper and face to face ... The next ten to 15 years will see a dramatic change in the way in which we deliver services. They'll be on screens. We'll get paid differently. We may well be delivering services that we get paid for by the number of hits on our icon on a screen. Put all of that into a pot, and we believe we go for a new name and brand."

So farewell Peat Marwick Mitchell, Ernst and Whinney and other history-laden names. One possibility is KEY — capturing a little of the existing firms, yet providing a symbol in the shape of a key, with overtones of unlocking the door to wealth creation.

The regulators could yet scupper both sets of deals, forcing the firms to look at other fund-raising alternatives. Put simply, a merger remains the easiest way of raising money. Sharman intends to hammer the message home. "The regulators have shown every sign of being open. It's up to us to convince them of the merits of the case."

Son of Pru

ONE good thing about all the advertisements for perfume, alcohol and toys that swamp our television screens at this time of year is that they keep the odious "The Man from the Pru" slots off the box. These, of course, feature Sir Peter Davis in various relaxed poses — reading a book, walking by the beach, in fact everything but keeping a close eye on his direct sales operation.

Who came up with these great adverts and who persuaded Sir Peter to feature himself in them? The trail leads to the advertising agency Abbott Mead Vickers (or AMV/BDDO to the *aficionados*) which came up with the campaign and happens to employ a chap called Matt Davis — son of Sir Peter.

"You've had Christmas early, why can't I?"

● *I AM afraid the gloriously named new head of the French employers' federation, Baron Ernest "Antoine" de Seillierb de Laborde, has been exposed as a softy. Antoine — who it emerged recently is a close personal friend of Lionel Jospin, the Socialist Prime Minister — was elected on Tuesday, promising that he had a "killer instict". Now it has emerged that the prize possessions at his Paris flat are four teddy bears he has owned since childhood — Bruno, François, Mustafa and Robert.*

Meanies

I SEE the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future have some work to do. The Low Pay Unit has announced its 1997 Scrooge awards for the hardest-hearted employers, offering the worst deals to their staff. Among the nominees are a car park company in the Midlands, which was paying its staff £2.74 an hour while charging a local authority £5.20 an hour for the same employee, a firm of painters and decorators, which told a new employee she would be paid only £2 an hour during a two-week trial then extended the trial period to six months, and a security company in Middlesex, which refused to pay a guard for 40 hours work over a weekend. But the prize goes to Square Deal Timber in Somerset, which employs a dozen staff at £3 an hour with no overtime, holiday or sick pay. It is closing for two weeks over Christmas and is not paying its employees a penny.

Sans Liberty

TIME for an update on the Denis Cassidy index. As I pointed out a couple of months ago, the Tyneside tycoon who used to run British Homes Stores and Boddingtons is not having a happy time of it with the companies that now occupy his time. When this index was launched, Cassidy became agitated, but his attention was soon distracted thanks to the action of the Stewart-Liberty family and Bryan Myerson to have him removed as chairman of Liberty's. This was both good for the index — as Cassidy's stuggle put some zest into Liberty shares. But he lost the fight and Liberty has now to be removed from the list.

Now there is further bad news. Olivers, the shoe chain Cassidy chairs, last week lost the battle to take over Sears's Shoe Express. And yesterday that fine label maker Ferguson — chairman D Cassidy — lost nearly a third of its value after a profit warning. Cassidy is planning to retire from Ferguson's board next year, presumably to lick his wounds.

Believable

FOR a few years now Lord Grade, five days short of his 91st birthday, has been talking with his customary enthusiasm about his latest project, a film called *Something to Believe In*. Now it is actually going to see the light of day. The film — "no sex, no violence, no bad language" has finished shooting. The cigar-chomping Lew has already sold continental European rights to the Kirch group of Germany and there is considerable interest from other parts of the world. The film, featuring everyone from Tom Conti and Placido Domingo to Maria Pitillo, is a serious tear-jerker featuring a terminally ill blackjack dealer from Las Vegas and a weeping Madonna in Italy. It is much more likely to be a hit than some of Lew's other pictures — such as *Raise The Titantic*. Lew always says, with the wisdom of hindsight, that it would have cost less to lower the Atlantic. And to prove age does not wither him, Lew is also on the verge of getting a three-year extension to his contract advising a "foreign entertainment company" which just happens to be Euro Disney.

JASON NISSÉ

Age appears to be no barrier for the cigar-chomping Lord Grade

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Gilts advance as equities fall

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on *the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend.* Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
584	407½	Allied Domecq	[illegible]		4.6	13.5
626	387½	Bulmer (HP)	380		2.8	11.9
[illegible]	[illegible]	Burn Stewart	[illegible]			
[illegible]	[illegible]	Diageo	[illegible]			
1040	365	Glenmorangie A	[illegible]			
380	360	Highland Dist	[illegible]			
335	181½	Matthew Clark	[illegible]			
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]			
[illegible]	[illegible]	SA Breweries	[illegible]			

BANKS

[illegible]

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING & CONSTRUCT

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

[illegible]

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

[illegible]

ELECTRICITY

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
446	154½	Br Energy	408	-15	4.3	40.2
670	463½	Energy Group	655	+10	4.0	14.1
315	192	National Grid	290	-5	5.0	13.5
625	427	National Power	583	-5	5.9	8.1
547	352½	Nthn Ireland	515	-6	5.3	35.6
846	565½	PowerGen	818	-6½	4.0	12.4
500	319½	Hydro-Elect	492	-4	4.7	11.1
562	331½	Scottish Power	519	-7	4.7	12.7
508	373½	Southern Elec	494	-5	5.7	13.0

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

[illegible]

ENGINEERING

[illegible]

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

[illegible]

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

[illegible]

INSURANCE

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS

[illegible]

MEDIA

[illegible]

MINING

[illegible]

OIL & GAS

[illegible]

OTHER FINANCIAL

[illegible]

PROPERTY

[illegible]

PHARMACEUTICALS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
285	98	Br2 Biotech	103½	+1½		
1115	610	Cantab Pharma	665	-15		
673	247½	Celltech	290			
443½	225½	Chiroscience	240	-3½		
192	187½	Cortecs	187½			
1477½	885½	Glaxo Well	1425	-30	2.9	29.3
245	91	ML Laboratories	92	-½		
330½	182	Medeva	182	-3	3.2	34.0
403	228½	Phytopharm	271½	-1½		
202½	177½	Powderject	194½			
82	24½	Proteus Intl	42	-2		
84	56	Ransom (Wm)	73		4.3	15.1
737½	262½	Scotia	345	-10		
287½	216	Shire Pharms	284½			
95	46	SkyePharma	52½	-½		
662	384½	SmithKline	639	-1	1.7	31.8
392	180	Therp Anti Inc	224	-2½		
707½	367½	Vanguard	416	+1		
435	186½	Xenova	170	-5		
2291	1535½	Zeneca	2085	+6	2.2	27.9

PRINTING & PAPER

[illegible]

RETAILERS, FOOD

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
181½	105½	ASDA Group	178	+7½	2.2	16.6
564½	415	Brake Bros	564½	+1	2.3	19.4
57	38½	Budgen	55½	+½	3.2	12.8
63	41½	Dairy Farm Ind	56		6.5	18.8
246½	189	Fanpak	220		2.8	17.5
62½	35½	Fitzwilton	41		8.9	11.3
117½	80	Fyffes	95		2.2	12.0
2280	1335	Greggs	2050	+75	2.1	19.8
136	76½	Iceland Group	136	+1½	5.0	17.1
353½	265	Kwik Save	309	-6	8.1	11.1
221½	144	Morrison (W)	221		1.0	19.4
67½	39	Park Foods	45		8.6	12.8
8½	5½	Regina Hlth	8½			
430	307	Sainsbury	336½	+7½	5.2	12.1
530	307	Salisbury JT	510	+5	3.1	20.8
203½	161½	Somerfield	201½		6.3	7.8
548	327	Tesco	485	-3	2.7	19.3
258½	189½	Thorntons	254½		2.9	20.4
465½	335½	Watson & Philip	465	+1	4.8	11.2

RETAILERS, GENERAL

[illegible]

SUPPORT SERVICES

[illegible]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
502½	368½	BT	467	-16	5.2	13.9
636	450	Cable Wireless	542	+9	2.5	22.8
338½	206½	Cable&Wire Comm	277½	-7		
686½	270	Coll Telecom	643½	-28		
315	167½	Euro Telecom	252½		1.3	31.2
230	91½	General Cable	91½	-5		
280	184½	Orange	265	+4		
336	248½	Securicor	283	-2	0.8	30.3
134½	61½	TeleWest	71	-4		
451½	240	Vodafone	430		1.5	35.4

TEXTILES & APPAREL

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
76	37	Albion	56		4.0	53.8
128½	77½	Alexon W	123½		6.6	11.5
205½	119½	Allied Text	128½		7.7	7.8
233½	165½	Baird (Wm)	214½	-1½	5.7	18.8
135½	99½	Bridport-Gundry	128½		4.7	15.6
120½	92½	Br Mohair	93½		7.4	35.6
180	67½	Claremont Gar	68½		13.2	
142½	90½	Coats Viyella	95½	+½	18.6	13.9
324	220	Courtaulds Text	380	-3½	5.3	32.3
78	57	Dawson	67½		6.4	12.0
257½	166	Dewhirst (I)	238	+1	2.4	15.0
31½	22	Dixie Heel	22		9.1	8.2
49	23	Drummond	25½	-2	10.0	8.6
35	24	Faupel	35		8.0	7.0
123	74	FII	115		2.2	25.2
11½	7½	Foster (John)	9½			
70½	47½	Franck	52½		8.1	11.9
125	66	Haggas	78½	-3	7.2	11.3
13½	5½	Hartstone	9½	+1½	8.3	25.5
259½	240½	Hicking Pntcst	261½	-3½	3.7	14.2
7½	1½	Hollas	2½			
32½	10½	Honeysuckle	11½			
102	69	Horace Small	72			7.7
53½	16½	Jacques Vert	21½			
67½	42½	Jerome (S)	42½	-2½	8.2	10.4
380	293	Jones Stroud	315	-43½	4.5	13.1
205	110	Lambert	203½		4.9	13.6
195	116	Lamont	139		11.5	11.5
172	105	Leeds	111	-1½	7.2	
38½	12½	Leslie Wise Gp	13		21.6	16.0
77	47	Lister (Sit)	71		4.0	11.8
8½	3½	PEX	3½			6.0
207½	137½	Parkland	132½		8.2	5.8
118	88	Penlland	102½	+1½	4.4	15.4
103	52	Pittards	56		7.8	3.8
47½	35	Readicutt	41		7.9	12.0
45½	19½	Richards	32½	-1	7.8	
40½	20½	SEET	22½			
48½	26½	Sherwood Gp	30½		14.8	30.3
144½	107½	Shiloh	107½	-1	4.7	7.5
72½	50½	Sirdar	51½		13.3	7.4
41½	31½	Stirling Gp	41½	+2	7.2	9.6
18½	8½	UK Safety	9			11.0
193	138½	Usher (Frank)	138½	-2½	9.9	7.0
180½	60	Warsons	84½		9.7	5.8
205	139	Yhtlyde	140		7.1	16.5

TRANSPORT

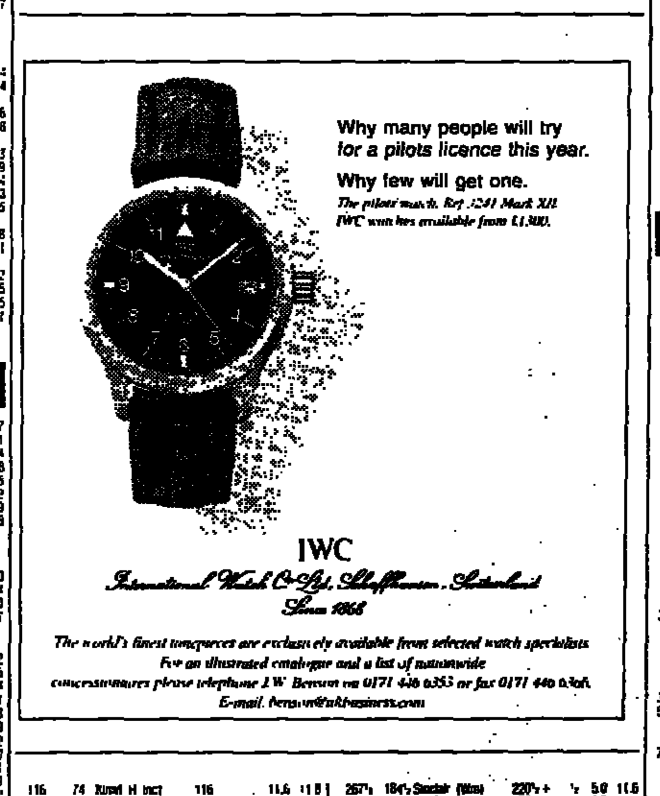
1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
252	180½	Air London	210		3.9	12.9
462½	234	All Nippon Air	234	-16½	0.8	
444	329½	Arriva	350½	-3½	4.5	10.2
319½	247	Assoc Br Ports	301½		3.4	15.4
174½	124	Avis Europe	171½	-1	2.4	17.7
614	475	BAA	505	+10	3.2	15.4
763½	500	Br Airways	568	-3	3.4	21.6
112½	87½	Clarkson (H)	105½		4.7	9.8
162½	111½	Clydeport Ops	138½		4.5	8.1
320½	187½	Dart	320½	+9	2.6	15.7
188½	107½	Eurodollar	188		4.7	14.8
88	54½	Eurotunnel Uts	59			
256	184½	FirstBus	217	-1½	3.4	15.3
157	118½	Fisher (James)	120		2.9	9.3
685	620	Forth Ports	615		2.7	15.8
540	424	Go-Ahead	536½	-2	1.9	16.8
513	388½	Goode Durrant	490		2.6	16.1
292	109½	Helphire Gp	280½	+4	0.4	34.5
700	405	Irish Cont	740		0.7	16.5
104	73	Jacobs	79	-1½	3.2	35.2
98½	64½	Lon & Ovs Frts	88½			
471½	388	Mersey Docks	455	+5	3.8	15.9
188½	121½	NFC	143½		5.1	24.6
620	434	Natl Express	620	+12½	2.4	13.8
631½	448½	Ocean Group	595	+5½	3.3	19.8
119½	82½	Ocean Wilson	105	-½	4.5	18.8
751	557	P & O Dfd	690	+13	5.5	16.7
129	101	P & O 5.5%	110½		6.2	
1121	540	Railtrack	950	-17	3.0	18.8
53½	32	Seacon	38		4.0	25.4
505	305	Stentair	318½		2.1	28.8
861	589½	Stagecoach	807½	+1½	1.6	18.3
652½	542½	Tibbet & Britn	565		3.6	15.7
208½	162½	TDG	207½		5.7	14.7
98½	65½	Uplead	70		3.6	10.6
103½	72½	Utd Carriers	73½		6.0	11.4

WATER

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
885	577½	Anglian	820	-14	5.5	11.2
287½	203	East Surrey	287½		4.9	11.6
978½	740	Hyder	956½	+5	5.9	8.2
149½	101½	Hyder Cm Pf	119	+½	8.8	
680	532½	Mid Kent Hdgs	675		5.9	9.9
1050	683	Severn Trent	1009	+1½	4.7	11.0
3290	2755	South Staffs	3277½		3.6	13.5
938½	598½	South West	933½	-1½	5.1	11.8
970	593½	Thames	916	-4	4.9	10.1
843	665½	Utd Utilities	783	-1	6.1	12.7
528½	344½	Wessex	499	-2½	4.8	9.6
503½	325	Yorkshire	473½	-7½	5.2	9.2

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
256	84½	Abacus Recruit	251½	+41½	0.7	23.7
217	170	Cale Inns	207	-½	1.8	15.7
262½	180	Dawson Hdgs	220		2.7	21.2
51½	26½	Freeport	31½	+1½		
98½	63½	Megalomedia	65		0.4	30.9
65	22½	Memory Corp	26½	+1½		
590	280	Prism Rail	380		1.8	
1265	732½	Ramco Egy	852½	-10	0.1	
783	618½	Southern News	738		3.4	19.8
84½	65½	Southern Vectis	84½		3.1	17.8
60½	17	Trocadero	17	-½		



BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

1997 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gro red yld
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8¾% 1998	116½		3.99	6.70
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 9¾% 1998	100½		9.74	7.21
[illegible]	100	Treas 7¼% 1998	100		7.25	7.21
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 14% 1998-01	102½		13.62	7.27
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 15½% 1998	106½		14.60	7.20
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 12% 1998	104½		11.51	7.17
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9½% 1999	102¾		9.28	7.09
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 12¼% 1999	106½		11.53	7.05
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10½% 1999	104½	-½	10.03	6.96
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 6% 1999	99½	+½	6.06	6.83
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 10¼% 1999	105½		9.69	6.90
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9% 2000	104½		8.62	6.83
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2000	103½		7.74	6.73
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2000	103½		8.24	6.82
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 13% 2000	114½	+½	11.39	6.86
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10% 2001	109½	+½	9.17	6.78
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7% 2001	101½	+½	6.92	6.63

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

1997 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gro red yld
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7% 2002	101½	+½	6.88	6.53
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9¾% 2002	112½	+½	8.67	6.61
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2003	106½	+½	7.49	6.49
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10% 2003	116½	+½	8.59	6.51
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 11½% 2001-04	113½	+½	10.12	6.78
[illegible]	[illegible]	Fund 3½% 1999-04	90½	+½	3.88	5.28
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2004	116½	+½	8.15	6.45
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 6¾% 2004	101½	+½	6.63	6.41
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2005	115	+½	7.52	6.39
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2005	117½	+½	9.08	6.39
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 12½% 2003-05	128½	+½	3.70	6.54
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2006	107½	+½	6.96	6.35
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7½% 2006	108½	+½	7.11	6.39
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2002-06	105½	+½	7.58	6.64
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 11¾% 2003-07	121½	+½	9.64	6.58
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2007	115½	+½	7.39	6.37
107½	96½	Treas 7¼% 2007	107	+½	6.78	6.29
121½	108½	Treas 9% 2008	121½	+½	7.42	6.26
114½	101	Treas 8% 2009	113½	+½	7.02	6.30
99½	88½	Treas 6¼% 2010	99½	+½	6.29	6.32
124½	109½	Conv 9% 2011	123½	+½	7.28	6.33
125½	[illegible]	Treas 9% 2012	125	+½	7.20	6.34
93½	80½	Treas 5½% 2008-12	93½	+½	5.90	6.22
113	98½	Treas 7¾% 2012-15	112½	+½	6.89	6.42

LONGS (over 15 years)

1997 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gro red yld
116½	100½	Treas 8% 2013	116½	+½	6.88	6.35
118½	101½	Treas 8% 2015	118½	+½	6.77	6.29
127½	103½	Treas 8¾% 2017	127½	+½	6.88	6.32
122½	101½	Tr 8% 2021	121½	+½	6.60	6.28

UNDATED

1997 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gro red yld
55½	43½	War Ln 3½%	55½	+½	6.35	
38½	30½	Treas 2½%	38½	+½	6.50	
61½	49½	Consols 4%	60½	+½	6.62	

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of: 5% 3%

1997 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	5%	3%
194½	184½	Treas IL 2½% 2001	194½	-½	3.00	3.32
192½	180½	Treas IL 2½% 2003	192½	-½	3.00	3.22
124½	117½	Treas IL 4¾% 2004	124½	-½	2.98	3.17
206½	190	Treas IL 2% 2006	206½	-½	3.01	3.15
188½	170½	Treas IL 2½% 2009	187½	-½	2.98	3.10
197½	176½	Treas IL 2½% 2011	196½	-½	2.99	3.09
164½	144½	Treas IL 2½% 2013	163½	-½	3.00	3.09
177½	153½	Treas IL 2½% 2016	176½	-½	3.00	3.08
172½	147½	Treas IL 2½% 2020	171½	-½	3.02	3.09
145½	122½	Treas IL 2½% 2024	143½	-½	3.01	3.07
142½	119½	Treas IL 4⅛% 2030	141½	-½	3.00	3.06

Source: FT Information

Price at suspension, † Ex dividend, ‡ Ex scrip, ▲ Ex rights issue, ▼ Ex all, § Ex capital distribution, * Figures or report awaited, .. No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index.

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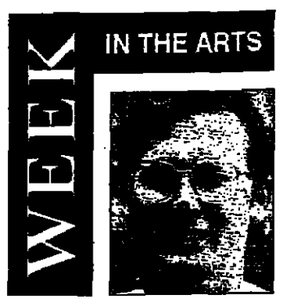
PRICE INFORMATION SERVICE

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
ABI SOVEST UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7879 Dealing: 0171 407 7896				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	142.61	151.23	- 1.17	...
Do MAY Ie Dec 19	138.63	126.83	...	...
UK Equity Safeguard	111.35	119.06	+ 0.83	2.47
Do MAY Ie Sep 19	106.55	106.53	...	...
Cash	95.36	101.14	...	3.75
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	377.90	407.70	+ 2.60	1.72
UK Small Cos	70.43	83.97	+ 0.20	0.49
FTSE 250 Index	98.48	105.31	- 0.17	2.11
Bound UK Index	2347.33	2477.59	- 62.06	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	81.57	84.45	- 0.03	...
Monthly Inc	42.43	45.32r	+ 0.35	8.72
International Funds				
American Gen	290.10	307.60	- 2.70	...
American Smlr	232.23	246.37	- 0.28	...
JG US Index	2297.79	2421.04	...	4.60
European Gen	329.10	347.90	+ 3.40	...
European Smlr	140.08	150.69	+ 0.24	...
Japan Gen	108.38	113.30	+ 4.50	...
Asia Pacific	66.86	71.21	+ 1.44	1.06
Pacific Smlr	106.81	114.32	+ 1.67	...
Greater China	200.74	214.70	+ 0.25	...
Latin America	105.43	112.89r	+ 1.23	...
Int Growth	165.20	177.74	+ 0.27	...
Balanced Exempt	154.60	168.00	...	...
Global Strategy	46.67	49.91	- 0.45	...
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01202 552 221				
Sterling Acc	848.50	900.50	- 3.40	2.59
Sterling Inc	699.90	733.90	- 2.70	2.59
UK Growth Acc	585.20	622.50	- 2.30	2.49
UK Growth Inc	350.80	373.40	- 1.00	2.49
Higher Inc Acc #	1075.00	1143.00	- 6.00	4.77
Higher Inc Inc #	552.20	587.40	- 2.40	4.77
GiltsFixd Int Acc	232.40	245.40	+ 0.40	5.61
GiltsFixd Int Inc	95.78	102.20	+ 0.20	5.61
Nth America	410.80	437.00	- 2.90	...
Europe	445.80	474.20	- 2.90	0.59
Intl Equity	119.70	123.70	- 0.60	2.25
Intl Fixed Int Acc	145.80	155.20	- 0.50	4.46
Intl Fixed Int Inc	93.63	99.60	- 0.20	4.46
Global Opps	109.10	116.00	- 0.69	0.39
Global Dpps	75.25	80.05	- 0.44	0.40
Japan	73.52	78.63	- 1.52	...
Managed Inc	52.00	55.32r	- 0.25	4.07
Managed Acc	183.10	195.00	- 0.70	1.13
US Emerging Cos	213.10	227.00	- 0.70	...
Ethical	89.20	94.80	- 0.04	1.03
International	138.00	147.00	- 0.20	0.58
Dividend & Growth	82.21	87.45	+ 0.54	2.98
Global Bnds & Sec	77.90	83.20	+ 0.21	2.40
Latin America	78.38	83.38	- 0.52	0.80
Capital Reserve	153.60	153.70	...	4.55
ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0141 275 8500				
H&P UK Growth	112.80	120.10	- 0.50	1.95
Equity Income #	159.10	168.20	- 0.50	3.81
Extra Income #	304.10	323.00	- 0.70	4.61
Smaller Cos	101.10	107.50	- 0.10	2.14
International	128.20	136.30r	+ 0.40	2.22
ABERDEEN UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0800 833 680				
American	77.51	80.55	- 0.62	...
Emerging Mkts	58.94	63.39	- 0.09	0.11
Equitrust	168.18	174.91	- 1.07	...
Extra Income #	58.20	61.20r	- 0.14	4.58
Far East Trend Exc	76.37	80.19	+ 0.59	1.06
Fixed Interest #	28.07	29.19r	+ 0.03	7.52
Fixed Inc Tst #	184.72	193.82	+ 1.06	9.06
Japan	142.74	148.39	- 1.52	...
Latin American	67.55	71.47	+ 0.15	...
Pacific	54.85	57.54	+ 0.41	0.21
Property	97.25	96.85	+ 0.82r	1.19
UK Emerging Cos	71.79	77.56	+ 0.04	0.07
UK Growth	68.19	72.07	- 0.24	1.14
Abrd World Port #	87.90	92.52r	- 0.14	2.54
Ethical	85.16	88.58r	+ 0.14	0.80
Aberdeen Glt Inc #	59.88	59.80r	+ 0.03	7.42
ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0131 220 0733				
UP Small Cos	2497.00	2680.00	- 6.00	...
ABNWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0171 256 5868				
Nadjil Property #	111.20	118.30	-	4.80
ALLCHURCHES INV MGMT SVS LTD				
01452 505 959				
Amity Income	107.87	114.46	- 0.67	1.74
Income Builder Inc	96.42	102.57r	- 0.18	3.16
BAGE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
01293 539 011				
Dillwyn Dist Fund	138.98	144.30	...	...
Franklin Pond Fmly	81.30	84.55	...	...
BAILLIE GIFFORD & CO LTD				
0131 222 4242				
American Sm Cos	444.00	472.30	+ 0.10	...
Bond	124.50	130.80	...	6.43
Bal Smlr Cos	111.90	118.70	- 0.30	1.90
Europe	346.00	367.30r	- 2.40	...
Euro Smlr Cos	122.80	133.30r	- 0.70	0.20
High Income #	69.51	73.99r	+ 0.11	5.44
Income	410.20	436.40r	+ 0.30	4.89
Japan	275.60	292.10	- 4.10	...
Latin American	106.70	113.50	- 0.50	...
Pacific	72.31	82.74r	+ 1.34	1.18
Uk Smlr Cos	132.37	141.34	+ 0.06	1.29
Japanese Sm Cos	444.90	468.90	- 5.90	...
Mngd Fd	220.00	233.00	- 0.80	2.45
BANK OF IRELAND FUND MGRS LTD				
0171 489 6573				
Dlt & Quasi	420.70	459.40	+ 3.30	0.78
Capital Gnth	163.90	173.20	+ 3.90	2.48
Wrldw Opps	236.70	258.50	+ 1.40	0.00
BARCLAYS FUNDS LTD				
Cardiuma Help Desk 0181 522 4000				
Income Funds				
Tsb	131.20	137.20	...	6.68
Tsb Acc	131.30	131.30	+ 0.10	6.68
Income #	172.00	180.30	- 3.60	3.94
Income Builder #	82.10	87.44	- 0.27	4.52
Balanced Funds				
Exempt	169.50	173.30	- 0.70	2.20
500	578.50	608.70	- 0.60	2.67
General	480.20	434.30	- 2.40	1.72
Property	264.10	283.30r	...	5.61
Trustee	284.10	307.30r	- 2.00	1.54
Growth Funds - UK				
Capital	181.30	194.30	- 1.20	1.78
FTSE 100	132.00	140.70r	- 1.10	1.74
Growth Acc	573.10	608.70	- 4.30	1.56
Smaller Cos	60.73	64.70	- 0.14	2.25
Smaller Cos Acc	73.14	78.02	- 0.17	2.25
Growth Funds - Overseas				
America	203.09	218.20r	- 1.40	0.00
American Growth	163.10	172.80	- 0.30	...
Japan	85.44	100.80	- 2.50	...
Japan Acc	96.54	102.80	- 2.50	...
Japan Spec Sits	43.36	45.77	- 1.00	...
Worldwide	213.20	227.30	- 1.40	0.93
Barclays Investment Portfolios				
Managed Income	49.11	50.78	- 0.26	7.10
Mngd Gwth & Inc #	47.40	50.00	- 0.37	4.97
Managed Growth	49.88	53.15	- 0.31	0.56
BARING FUND MANAGERS LTD				
0171 214 1004				
American Growth	181.70	191.90	- 0.90	...
Amer Smlr Cos	163.70	174.10	+ 0.60	...
Europe	175.03	185.20	+ 0.70	0.30
Equity Income #	125.40	133.50	- 0.40	4.20
European Growth	491.50	517.00	- 3.30	0.80
Europe	410.00	448.20r	- 0.90	0.00
German Growth	103.40	108.50	- 0.90	0.59
Global Bond	74.65	78.40	- 0.36	4.69
Global Growth	171.50	182.90r	- 0.10	0.49
Japan Growth	108.60	114.90	- 3.70	...
Japan Smaller	78.47	84.05	- 1.77	...
Japan Trust	22.32	24.35	- 0.02	...
Pacific	174.00	185.10	- 0.10	2.80
UK Growth	155.00	157.50	- 0.20	2.00
UK Smlr Cos	120.50	142.90	- 0.30	1.00
UK Smaller Cos	128.50	134.20	+ 0.70	1.03
Global Managed	94.28	100.70	- 0.10	1.00
BLACKSTONE FRANKS UT MGRS LTD				
0171 256 3000				
Intl Gwth Fund Inc	101.50	108.00	...	...
Special Opps Inc	60.40	64.26	...	...
BRITANNIA FUND MGRS LTD				
0141 223 8020				
Balanced Growth	183.55	191.20	- 1.26	1.11
-do- Accum	217.12	226.17	- 1.51	1.11
Smaller Cos	182.34	188.94r	...	...
Higher Yield #	68.41	72.30	- 1.34	3.56
Nth American Gth Inc	133.47	138.65	+ 0.12	...
European Growth	195.39	203.52	- 1.73	...
-do- Accum	188.56	207.97	- 1.77	...
Mngd Pfolio Inc	58.79	61.24	- 0.12	1.25
-do- Accum	63.61	66.45	- 0.13	1.25
Ex Spec Opps	105.15	112.07	- 0.26	...
Pacific Exch	108.95	113.48	+ 0.67	0.04
Uk Growth #	122.13	127.22r	+ 0.03	2.03
-do- Accum #	136.23	141.93	+ 1.04	2.03
Japan	97.34	98.57	- 0.54	...
Gilt & Fixed Int #	108.92	112.88r	- 0.10	7.32
BURRAGE UNIT TST MGMT LTD				
0171 480 2718				
Cont Bond Gbl	66.00	67.5r	...	6.18
CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD				
0161 837 5063				
Income	213.60	223.70r	- 0.90	1.60
UK Growth	250.00	262.50	- 1.00	1.51
UK Income	188.60	198.20	- 1.00	3.50
CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD				
01707 852 100				
Can Low Dnd	273.30	289.60	- 1.80	1.17
-do- Income Dist	155.80	165.70	- 0.40	3.06
-do- Accum	520.10	553.50	- 1.30	3.06
Gilt & Fixed Int	43.14	45.95	+ 0.08	5.9
Specialt Units	325.30	347.32	- 1.66	1.67
Bond	180.20	189.90	- 0.20	5.78
Intl Growth	227.40	241.80	- 1.20	0.30
North American	318.00	338.40	...	...
Far East	288.58	297.65	+ 4.40	1.05
UK Smaller Cos	354.50	377.23	- 0.70	1.05
Eurogrowth	112.90	120.10	- 0.80	0.53
Japanese Growth	29.33	31.38	- 0.2	...
High Income	372.50	396.30	- 0.90	2.94
CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD				
0181 831 7433 Eng 0181 831 7433 Dlg 0181 834 7455				
American & Gen	380.70	397.90	+ 1.30	...
European Inc	178.20	188.60	- 1.40	0.93
Smaller Cos (N+S)	108.85	115.00	+ 0.20	1.57
Growth & Inc	88.72	93.70	+ 0.63	1.82
Income & Growth #	88.57	93.76	+ 0.63	4.09
-do- Accum #	114.27	120.95	+ 0.81	...
Japan & Gen	48.25	51.08	- 1.32	...
Nationwide Gwth	164.10	172.00	- 1.30	1.57
-do- Accum	188.57	199.40	- 1.50	1.57
Smaller Cos	119.60	126.50	- 0.80	0.04
High Yield	101.00	107.00r	- 3.20	3.67
CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
0171 606 0700				
Cazenove Portfolio	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
American Portfolio	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
European Portfolio	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Japanese Portfolio	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pacific Portfolio	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
UK Growth #	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
-do- Accum	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Gilt & Fixed Int #	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
CCM CHURCH OF ENGLAND FUNDS				
0171 588 7876				
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
COF CHARITY FUNDS				
0171 588 1815				
Deneshund Inc	514.45	528.27	...	3.95
Investment Acc	4594.54	4698.88	...	...
Fixed Int Inc	133.66	134.20	...	6.64
Fixed Int Acc	267.13	268.21	...	6.59
CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD				
0171 588 8900				
Business Int	98.33	103.38r	...	5.98
Dual Bio-Tech	38.03	42.19r	- 1.00	...
Acorn Ethical Tst	214.05	227.71r	...	0.64
City Fin Asnda	84.24	90.56	...	2.93
City Fin Int	88.82	92.38	...	0.08
Friars Hse Cap	305.08	309.45	...	1.61
Buckley WM Gth	141.89	150.40	...	...
Stone Utility	83.63	85.84r	- 0.53	3.92
CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0171 711 0271 Admin: 01277 227 300				
Emerging Markets	48.01	50.94	+ 0.13	...
CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD				
0345 772 233				
American Gwth	97.10	103.30	- 0.15	...
Dragon Growth	46.26	50.03	+ 0.03	1.53
Equity High Inc	115.24	121.94r	- 0.18	3.10
-do- Accum	179.94	194.08	- 0.27	3.10
Extra Income Inc	28.95	30.47	- 0.02	6.89
Extra Income Acc	33.85	36.42	- 0.07	6.00
European Gwth	81.04	85.76	- 0.47	0.12
Eurogrowth	35.10	37.60	- 0.01	...
General Equity	133.78	141.19	- 0.58	2.26
Japan Growth	32.72	34.81	- 0.01	...
Pacifgrow Gwth	84.03	86.74	- 0.53	1.43
Pref Bnd Cns Inc	41.74	44.17	+ 0.18	1.37
-do- Accum	44.94	47.58	+ 0.20	1.37
Retirement Inc #	34.19	36.33	- 0.15	4.91
Special Sits	54.58	58.67	- 0.21	2.40
UK & Overseas	67.07	70.97	- 0.45	0.49
COLONIAL UNIT TRUSTS (GRO LTD)				
01634 808 000				
Balanced	81.32	84.70	- 0.25	3.53
Capital	103.31	104.48	- 0.34	1.30
High Income	56.51	59.89r	- 0.07	6.41
Top 50	74.01	77.09	- 0.16	1.88
COMMERCIAL UNION TRUST MGRS LTD				
0181 686 3818				
PRESTIGE PORTFOLIO (PPT FUNDS)				
Income Funds				
Equity Inc	229.83	239.22	- 0.08	4.24
Long Gilt	54.74	52.82	+ 0.14	4.08
Monthly Inc Plus	60.62	61.28	+ 0.01	7.31
Preference Shares	57.60	60.21	+ 0.05r	5.47
Balanced Funds				
High Yield	165.48	172.37	- 0.37	5.59
Managed Fund	84.84	88.36	- 0.28	2.40
UK Growth Funds				
Smaller Cos	51.75	53.91r	+ 0.50	1.57
-do- Accum	61.88	64.47	+ 0.07	1.57
UK & Overseas	123.07	129.84	+ 0.33	2.10
-do- Accum	165.08	172.92	+ 0.43	2.10
UK Growth	248.58	255.84	- 0.95	1.54
International Growth Funds				
Europe Growth	357.58	373.70	- 1.94	0.48
Far Eastern Gth	88.25	100.29	- 0.12	0.36
Global Bond	72.96	76.67	- 0.36	5.11
Japan Growth	85.94	91.57	- 1.84	...
North Amer Gwth	304.99	317.73	- 0.55	...
Oriental Growth	57.81	60.23	+ 0.09	0.01
Worldwide Growth	82.21	87.45	+ 0.54	2.98
OTHER CU TRUSTS (NON PPT FUNDS)				
Deposit Fund	82.40	82.40	+ 0.01	6.79
Homestake Fund	101.76	108.27	- 0.46	1.59
Dollar Fund	174.99	186.16	- 0.94	1.70
CONSISTENT UNIT TST MGMT CO LTD				
0171 407 5066				
Consistent Ut	42.26	45.02	+ 0.53	2.75
COOKE (HENRY) INV FUNDS LTD				
0800 528 558				
Growth	186.80	200.30r	- 0.80	2.26
Income	88.71	94.37	- 0.22	3.47
European Growth	82.22	87.96	- 0.84	0.38
Recovery	209.20	222.00	+ 0.50	1.88
CO-OP PENSION FDS UT MGRS LTD				
0171 283 5404				
Equity Dist	1205.70	1221.80r	...	3.03
CREDIT SUISSE ASSET MGMT FDS (UK) LTD				
01277 680 370				
European Inc	83.36	88.41	- 0.55	0.38
Fellowship Int	121.30	128.60	- 1.30	1.13
Income #	338.20	359.70	- 0.00	3.86
-do- Accum #	935.00	994.00	- 2.00r	1.19
Smaller Cos	234.40	248.30r	- 0.70	0.74
-do- Accum	293.90	312.60	- 0.90	...
Gilt Portfolio	118.10	125.60	- 0.40	1.28
Mthly Inc Port #	160.70	167.10	- 0.91	3.90
DIMENSIONAL TST MGMT LTD				
0171 439 1884				
Global Sm Cos	1775.40	1797.40	- 11.70	0.57
UK Small Cos	2597.30	2611.60	- 9.00	2.65
DISCRETIONARY UNIT FUND MGRS				
0171 387 6819				
Dfm Inc	253.36	281.10	...	...
DRESDNER RCM FUNDS (UK) LTD				
Dealing: 0171 956 7254 Client Help Line 0800 317573				
Formerly RIGT				
Amer Smlr Cos	182.10	204.30	+ 0.80	...
Asian Growth	184.00	196.30r	+ 4.00	0.30
Bond Income	108.00	112.10r	- 0.20	7.30
European	230.00	245.50	- 0.80	0.50
European Prty	123.20	131.00	- 0.80	2.70
European Special	159.20	158.00	- 0.70	...
Gilt Yield	127.30	134.50r	+ 0.40	6.30
Global Eqty Inc	138.00	144.30	- 0.60	1.80
High Yield	200.40	213.10r	- 0.80	4.50
Japan	277.10	294.70	- 5.60	...
Japanese Special	134.40	132.60	- 1.80	...
Money Market	192.50	192.50r	+ 0.02	6.00
North American	138.70	147.40	- 0.20	...
Smaller Cos	150.00	160.00	- 0.50	1.00
Smlr Cos Dist	150.00	160.00	- 0.50	1.00
UK Equity Growth	168.00	178.00	- 0.50	1.00
UK Smaller Cos	208.50	218.40	- 0.80	1.20
Recovery Fund	77.69	83.09r	+ 0.22	0.17
Emerg Markets	73.90	79.04	+ 0.16	1.07
Gilt Inc	54.16	57.46	+ 0.12	0.44
Global Growth @	82.39	82.39	- 0.56	0.41
EDINBURGH UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0345 080 586				
Commodities #	24.61	26.30r	+ 0.03	5.31
Enterprise	121.20	128.50r	+ 0.10	1.95
Equity Income #	173.50	184.30r	- 0.80	3.47
European	76.76	81.79	- 0.40	...
Financial	72.27	76.79	- 0.07	1.30
Growth & Inc #	357.30	379.80	- 1.40	2.21
High Dist #	222.30	236.20r	- 0.07	3.60
International	405.50	432.70	- 1.80	0.22
Int Cap Inc	117.50	125.40r	- 1.00	2.15
Latin American	38.88	38.25	- 0.13	...
High Gwth Port	97.72	102.90	...	0.50
Pacific	54.41	58.44	+ 0.28	...
Prof High Inc	28.09	27.31	- 0.02	6.50
Smlr	145.80	154.00	- 3.70	...
UK Smaller Cos	253.10	258.90	+ 0.20	1.12
Japan Sm Cos	227.70	241.10	- 2.50	...
Ukn Amer	531.80	562.30	- 3.00	0.52
UK Inc & Gwth	322.70	343.00	- 1.10	2.16
ELY PLACE UNIT MGRS LTD				
0171 242 0262				
UK Dividend Dbys	127.12	135.38	- 1.60	0.35
Growth Acc	316.40	336.80	+ 5.13	0.20
Income	638.50	680.25	+17.82	5.47
ENDOWMENT FUND MGMT LTD				
01371 873 281				
Endowment Ind	248.50r	264.40	+ 4.00	1.01
EQUITABLE UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
01206 431 400				
Eclipse	113.91	119.91	- 1.31	1.47
Ethical Tst	54.98	57.87	- 0.35	1.36
Far Eastern	215.05	226.37	- 1.75	2.81
High Income	173.79	182.94r	- 0.76	3.94
UK Index Tracking	68.77	70.26	- 0.45	2.33
Pulsar	135.76	142.91	- 0.42	1.35
Nth American	151.82	161.92	- 2.05	1.38
Pulsar	178.49	187.79	- 1.12	2.48
Smaller Cos	73.07	77.00r	+ 0.14	2.16
Special Sits	91.02	95.81	- 0.26	2.71
Tst of Inv Tsts	234.76	247.12	- 0.81	1.61
EXETER FUND MANAGERS LTD				
01392 412 144				
Capital Growth	137.84	145.25	- 0.04	...
Tst of Inv Tsts	58.18	62.78	- 0.06	0.46
High Income #	44.47	47.08	+ 0.09	10.02
Inter & Gt Opps	52.43	54.38	+ 0.01	...
Zero Preference	48.24	51.71r	- 0.01	...
FAMILY INVESTMENT MGMT LTD				
01273 724 570				
Family Asset Tst	119.00	127.40	- 0.70	2.12
Global Charities	342.88	363.88	+ 0.20	2.57
FIDELITY INVESTMENT SERVS LTD				
Callers: Private Clients: 0800 414 181				
Cash Fund	100.00	100.00	...	6.00
Cash Fnds				
Bond Fnds	28.18	27.15	- 0.16	5.38
Intl Bond	38.23	31.59r	- 0.04	5.38
Stockpicker				
Income Funds				
High Income	31.57	33.12r	- 0.06	4.74
Income Plus	171.40	182.38r	- 0.30	3.92
Extra Income	67.95	69.79	- 0.20	1.21
Corporate Income	39.76	39.96	- 0.09	2.37
Equity Funds				
Ethical	28.71	30.63	+ 1.32	...
American	417.50	443.00	+ 0.40	...
Asian Spec Sits	229.70	255.50	- 0.20	...
Japan Smaller Cos	17.05	18.08	- 0.01	0.24
Japan Growth	291.90	310.40	- 2.50	0.34
European Opps	108.30	116.00	- 0.90	0.49
Global Pmr	38.94	41.41	- 0.05	0.40
UK Growth	154.38	164.18	- 0.80	1.19
UK Smaller Cos	224.60	238.80	- 0.30	2.51
Intl PEP	59.95	63.71	- 0.20	1.09
Japan Spec Sits	66.90	60.34	- 1.10	...
Japan	149.00	157.60	- 1.30	1.67
Managed Intl	424.50	451.00	- 2.10	0.78
Magellan Plus	73.78	76.38	- 0.67	0.34
Discovery	68.95	73.32	- 0.22	1.46
South E Asia	148.10	158.70	+ 1.50	1.35
Special Sits	905.90	964.30	- 3.50	1.17
Specialist Funds				
Cash Accum Units	122.54	122.54	+ 0.02	6.00
FLEMING PRIVATE FUND MGMT LTD				
0171 814 2700				
Balanced #	165.40	187.10	...	1.86
Fleming Pfl Inc #	111.18	111.30r	- 0.20	5.74
Cap Prfm	188.50	190.00r	- 0.20	...
General Opps	168.40	167.60	...	3.22
Growth Inc	45.04	47.45r	- 0.29	1.19
Private Portfolio	562.00	589.10	...	0.76
FOREIGN & COLONIAL UNIT MGMT				
Dlg 01277 680 300 Admin/Int 01277 680 350				
East Smlr Cos	178.00	188.40	+ 0.07	...
High Income	22.63	24.00r	- 0.11	9.38
Japan Smlr Cos	11.10	11.66	- 0.19	...
US Smaller Cos	537.50	572.10	+ 7.60	...
FRANKLINTON UNIT MGMT LTD				
Eng 0171 380 0500 Dealing 0345 778501				
American Growth	102.10	108.50	+ 0.10	...
Asian Growth	102.40	108.20	+ 0.19	...
Amer Smlr Cos	127.00	135.00	+ 0.40	...
-do- Accum	752.90	802.00	+ 3.50	...
Capital Tst	448.00	437.50	- 0.20	1.26
-do- Accum	611.80	650.30	- 0.70	1.26
Cont Smlr Cos	65.49	70.08	- 0.16	1.03
-do- Accum	71.30	76.07	- 0.17	1.03
Convertible	145.80	155.10r	+ 0.10	5.30
Emerging Markets	338.90	360.40	+ 0.90	0.54
-do- Accum	62.57	66.65r	+ 0.05	0.54
Emerging Mkts	65.11	67.43r	+ 0.59	0.54
European	309.50	328.60	- 1.00	...
-do- Accum	701.80	713.80	- 1.00	...
Extra Income	406.80	507.00	- 1.10	3.90
GARTMORE FUND MANAGERS				
0171 782 2000 Dlgs only: 01277 284 421				
UK Growth Funds				
Emerging Cos	76.21	81.35	+ 0.18	1.78
Practical Inv Inc #	138.24	147.25	...	2.25
-do- Accum #	343.87	367.78	- 0.01	2.25
UK Index	223.47	224.59	- 0.83	2.88
UK Smaller Cos	248.78	266.87	+ 0.52	0.35
Income Funds				
Extra Yield	36.27	37.22	- 0.06	8.76
High Income	42.98	45.80r	- 0.11	3.95
UK Growth & Inc	198.14	211.19r	- 0.44	1.89
Global Bond	27.59	28.68r	- 0.16	5.67
International Funds				
Emerging Markets	42.84	45.82	+ 0.21	...
Global Managed	155.89	165.39	- 0.42	1.12
Gold & Int Res	78.64	83.43r	+ 1.30	...
Global Utilities	182.38	194.57r	- 0.39	0.92
Overseas Funds				
American	245.15	258.38	+ 0.26	0.34
European	157.00	177.42	- 0.74	0.48
Euro Sel Opps	268.62	283.04	- 1.34	...
Amer Emerging	198.61	211.66r	+ 1.89	...
Hong Kong	136.37	145.80	+ 0.63	1.55
Japan	148.63	157.71	- 3.99	...
Pacific Growth	135.34	146.16	+ 1.64	...
Balanced Pensions Managed Funds				
Cash Fund	154.59	154.59r	+ 0.02	6.53
Managed Equity	203.52	203.52	- 1.43	1.56
Long Term Bnd	312.91	312.91	- 1.38	2.67
Mngd Fixed Int	258.22	258.12	- 0.94	2.75
UK Equity	373.72	373.72	- 2.13	1.94
UK Emerging Cos	198.38	198.33r	+ 0.67	2.14
American	488.14	488.14	- 0.33	0.16
Japan	92.82	92.82r	- 2.02	...
European	436.50	436.50	- 2.19	0.61
Index Linked Gilt	212.62	212.62r	+ 0.03	2.

Last orders in the lottery saloon

WEEK IN THE ARTS



RICHARD MORRISON

Time, ladies and gentlemen, please! The words have a melancholy ring, do they not? Especially when they cut short a riotous session during which some estimable reveller — temporarily loaded, perhaps, from backing a 25-1 winner in the 2.30 at Newmarket — has announced that "the drinks are on me".

Everyone has quaffed prodigiously. Life has sweetened briefly. But now the saloon door is propped open. A blast of cold air and even colder reality hits the flushed faces. The mortgage is overdue, the car won't start, the marriage is crumbling, the kids are ungovernable, the job is unbearable, and the in-laws are staying for Christmas. The party's over. The pain is back.

But why did these doleful fantasies trudge through the morbid thickets of my mind yesterday, as Parliament debated the new Lottery Bill? After all, it is a long overdue piece of remedial legislation. It frees lottery money to be spent on what really matters: people, not buildings. It allows the Arts Council to adopt what Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, hilariously calls a "holistic approach to the quantum total of funding available to the arts". What that means in English (I think) is that lottery money and Treasury money now goes into the same pot.

It means, above all, that the short-term future of dozens of tottering arts organisations is probably assured. In the long term, of course, the Treasury might cut its cultural expenditure to a pittance, or the Government might divert yet more lottery money to "new opportunities" (ie, propping up health or education). But those are tomorrow's battles. The main thing today is that the ring-fencing of arts lottery money — which lavishly refurbished theatres while leaving theatre companies to crash — is abolished.

We have been through an amazing three years. We shall not see such an era of conspicuous cultural expenditure again. But now time has been called. The bar is closed: the man who bought all the drinks has vanished. The era of big capital projects is over. Unfortunately, however, one or two stragglers have only just arrived in the pub. They were promised free booze, and are distraught to discover that the cellars are dry.

Most prominent of the latecomers is the South Bank Centre. You can understand the frustration of the people there. Their grant application has been four years in discussion. It has been through more rewrites than Liz Taylor's marriage certificate. Matching funding, including a breathtaking £17 million gift from Paul Hamlyn, is in place — but precariously dependent on a £75 million Arts Council lottery grant. Last week the Arts Council finally said yes. More than that, it described Lord Rogers's glass roof scheme as "essential and visionary".

Champagne all round, then? Not exactly. No sooner had the Arts Council said yes than it said no. Or rather, it issued a statement of such Delphic obscurity that only intense textual deconstruction disclosed an admission that there is actually no money left in the lottery kitty to fund such a huge capital project. Not if the Arts Council also wants to fund equally "essential and visionary" building projects in Bristol, Gateshead and Stratford.

There followed a nimble rendition of that famous English gavotte *Pass the Buck*, in which the Arts Council appealed to the Culture Secretary to finagle an accountancy sleight-of-hand that would allow future lottery income to be spent now. No way, said Smith. The bar is closed; no more free drinks, and definitely no credit.

That is tough on the South Bank, because actually its scheme is "essential and visionary". Indeed, London's future as a world-class musical capital depends on making the Festival Hall and its ghastly concrete aprons a place where people want to go. Even yesterday secret talks were going on to save the scheme. But the harsh probability is that the South Bank may have missed last orders in the lottery saloon.

I am sorry about that. But it was an accident waiting to happen. The backlash against the "metropolitan snouts in the trough" perception of the past three years was bound to come. However much the lottery may have improved the country's "cultural fabric", there is no doubt that several huge lottery handouts have been public-relations disasters. We now need a period of quiet, steady, uncontroversial investment in quality performances, audience development and arts education. No more *grands projets*. Just hundreds of *petites victoires*. Let's hope Smith's Lottery Bill provides the basis for them.

In that respect, one small but revolutionary innovation of the past three years must be retained. That is Arts For Everyone Express, which channelled small grants from lottery funds (£5,000 maximum) to amateur and youth groups across Britain in a pilot scheme this year. At a stroke it did more to counter the "elitist" charge against the arts than 50 years of orthodox subsidy. In just three months it made 5,325 awards, reaching approximately 240,000 performers and an estimated audience of five million.

Those are astonishing figures for an outlay of just £21 million. To put it in context: the Millennium Dome would need to attract 200 million visitors to produce a comparable return on its £800 million cost. The Arts Council is rightly criticised for many of its decisions, or indecisions. But making this vastly wide-ranging scheme work was admirable. It must become a permanent fixture. There may be no more free drinks in the lottery saloon. But free peanuts? Those we can surely still afford.

THEATRE: Gogol's triumphant contest in hysteria; fairytale premiere for a Sondheim musical; and a curious Bardic transformation

Over the top on a trapeze

The Government Inspector
Almeida

You know it as soon as Ian McDiarmid scuttles on to a set whose plank walls and floor are so askew, they would surprise even the architect who was employed by the old woman who lived in a shoe. Moreover, McDiarmid's Mayor looks like a cross between a poisonous prawn and a disintegrating ferret, and he snaps "a bit of whisht if ye please" at his fellow-functionaries. Jonathan Kent's production of Gogol's great comedy is clearly not going to be a conventional one.

Actually, it is hard to say what a conventional revival would be. This is a play that in its time has been directed by Stanislavsky and Meyerhold and a million Marxists. It has been performed realistically, farcically, didactically and as a horrifying nightmare. It has, I suspect, less often been played as a grotesque mix of pacy knockabout and seedy fun in which a Fauntleroy from an oddly English St Petersburg is mistaken for a government inspector by 19th-century Russian provincials who have borrowed their accents and some of their ethics from *Trainspotting*.

As it turns out, Gogol can take it. The evening is highly enjoyable, thanks particularly to the imagination of the two lead actors and the adaptor. John Byrne's Scots version is pretty free. My translation does not require the Mayor to reprove his education supremo for hiring a games teacher who has been "caught having relations with a piece of gymnasium equipment", ie, the school's vaulting horse. Nor are there references to strong wine "with the Ivan the Terrible label" or ridding the town of "perverts and Papists". And Khlestakov, the young wastrel the mayor takes into his house, should surely describe his hostess as "all right", not as someone he might fancy "if I were on a desert island and had my eyes put out by a shark".

But why complain when you get such verve not only from your adaptor but from your cast? The relationship between McDiarmid's Lord Provost, as the Mayor is rechristened, and Tom Hollander's Khlestakov is a contest in hysteria. It is often over the top, sometimes over the big top — yet, wonder of wonders, it never becomes embarrassing or unfunny.

Hollander is always the overgrown infant, whether he is hungry and half-blubbing in pettish self-pity, or somersaulting in terror from a Provost he thinks has come to arrest him, or gulping and narcissistically gurgling at the goodies coming his way, or flashing goofy, greedy smiles at the women pursuing him. As for McDiarmid, he moves from frenzied panic to feral glee as Khlestakov succumbs to his bribes. His Provost is not the "dignified" figure Gogol specified. Rather, he's an insecure slum kid who has risen to become a roughhouse street operator and, at his moment of maximum hubris, is the Gorbals tyrant in excelsis.

There are other actors capable of simultaneously snarling and gloating, raging at their enemies and glorying in their triumph over them. I don't think anybody but McDiarmid could make you feel you are witnessing a sort of emotional and verbal trapezist, looping across the octaves from mood to mood. It is an astoundingly bold performance in a production that, thanks also to lively support from Brian Pettifer, Stuart McQuarrie and others, never relaxes its imaginative hold.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

DONALD COOPER

Tom Hollander as the overgrown infant Khlestakov in Jonathan Kent's marvellously unconventional production of *The Government Inspector*

Music master's early lesson

Saturday Night
Bridewell

The story of this musical is the stuff of fairytales. It should have been Stephen Sondheim's professional debut back in the mid-1950s, but the producer died and the show was put on hold. The hold lasted 40 years, but the fairytale bit is not that a prince at last woke the sleeping beauty, but that rescue came from the management of a fringe theatre — the metaphors break down here so I'll abandon them — who heard the music, mounted a concert version with the composer in the audience, and was given the go-ahead to produce a Sondheim premiere.

At three hours the show is too long for its content, but presumably a feeling for its historical interest discouraged leaving anything out. Catching snatches of the later Sondheim in the twists of the music and the dapper rhymes is certainly fun. "I was pouring coffee, you lit a cigarette. After that I forget." The conversational tone is unmistakable, as is the skill at slipping everyday experiences into a song which will then be repeated from a second, tarter point of view.

The book is by Julius and Philip Epstein, the authors of *Casablanca*, fondly recalling the comradely Brooklyn of their youth in the early months of 1929. Gene is their hero, son of a traveller in ladies' underwear but dreaming of joining Manhattan's high society. Every American's duty is to climb to the top but Gene relies on fantasy, acting big and losing his buddies' money. But they forgive him because he's Gene.

The lyrics sometimes show Sondheim putting an ironic take on this tale of the American's right to be ambitious, so long as he finally settles for love and the childhood neighbourhood. One of the buddies sings "All of us are for hoods!", but he means motherhood etc. The characters are a million blocks from the Jets and Sharks Sondheim would soon be giving voice to.

The ensemble work is nifty, though the buddies' attitude to dames is charmless. The co-directors (Carol Metcalfe, Clive Paget) achieve much on a stage that turns from front porch to hotel steps, speakeasy and other deftly suggested settings by Bridget Kimak. Sam Newman makes a personable, sure-voiced Gene, and Anna Francolini's clear voice, singing the melody high above the piano and sax, catches the style of the period particularly well. The occasion is gently pleasant but one can see why Sondheim was content to turn his attention elsewhere all those years ago.

JEREMY KINGSTON

MARILYN KINGWILL

Unmistakably Sondheim: Sam Newman and Anna Francolini dream of Manhattan

Poop-poop! It's Sir John

The Merry Wives of Windsor
Barbican

Ian Judge has a lucrative talent for transforming Shakespeare's plays into National Heritage fairytales. It takes real ingenuity, however, to turn the Bard's most parochial comedy into *The Wind in the Willows*. As played by that suave old buffer, Leslie Phillips, Sir John Falstaff is a magnificent Toad. With his pregnant gut squeezed into an implausibly tweedy Elizabethan suit, Phillips turns the melancholy Toad into an endearing egomaniac with a greasy orange toupee and a supernatural belief in his sexual prowess.

How the fat are fallen, especially when they try to seduce the bored housewives of Windsor. The weasels are Susannah York's Mistress Ford and Joanna McCallum's Mistress Page. The Gloucestershire crew, led by Peter Reeves's Shallow and Christopher Luscombe's Slender, do a lot of persistent badgering. And Falstaff's cronies Pistol, Nym and Bardolph are the motley collection of London sewer rats.

So much for pantomime. Yes, this is a clever cast, but it is also infuriatingly smug. Few designers are capable of filling the Barbican stage with as much topiary as Tim Goodchild. In a fit of pastoral authenticity, he succeeds in making early 17th-century Windsor look like the residential graveyard it is today. The local feud is between the publican and a French physician, and the serious gossip is the gulling of the lackadaisical Knight by Mistresses Ford and Page.

After teasing us with half a dozen brilliantly delivered lines, Phillips's Falstaff is thrown into a laundry basket and dumped in the Thames. The role of the caddish smooth seducer comes so easily to him that it becomes tedious when he's not around. Edward Petherbridge has to work harder for his come-uppance as the jealous husband, Master Ford, pursuing Falstaff like Inspector Clouseau. It's a nice, messy piece of acting that makes the wives look far more weaselly than the men.

The rest of the performances feel fatally disconnected from Ian Judge's Willowy production. Accents shamelessly skate all over the place. Cartoon caricatures light the way. For what it's worth, Christopher Luscombe has an indecently camp way with Slender and by far the best grip on the play's slippery language. But the steal of the night is Guy Henry's physician, who turns his French mispronunciations into very British scatalogical jokes. Why commute to the 17th century, however, when you can get all this on the 5.08pm from Paddington?

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

Monster raving loony

COMEDY
Johnny Vegas
The Talk of London

Remember the scruffy fat boy who sat on his own in the corner of the class and would always be bullied at playtime? The one from the really rough family whose mother would give him a pig's trotter to suck on rather than an ice lolly?

Well, the fat boy has grown up, adopted the name of Johnny Vegas and, a half-empty lager bottle in his hand, has set about taking his revenge on the world. Instead of haranguing strangers in the kebab van queue after closing hours in Manchester town centre, he vents his aggressions in comedy clubs, and shows how he found redemption by taking pottery classes.

Reactions to Vegas's performance in Edinburgh this year were so extravagant that it was tempting to assume that the usual festival hype had taken over. But his show is inspired. By turns self-pitying and belligerent, drunkenly incoherent and epigrammatic, he has created an irresistible monster.

The comedy of menace is a commonplace today: every other stand-up wants you to believe he is a psychotic rather than an English graduate playing with swear words. Vegas, on the other hand, is a fully rounded theatrical creation with no dress sense. If you met him at a bus-stop late one night, you would be torn between the urge to stay out of punching range and to edge closer to catch more of his rambling homilies.

Banal events are dressed up in florid prose pitched halfway between Les Dawson and Dylan Thomas. Men do not simply fail at chatting up women, they fumble with the Keys of Capability at the Door of Desire. "Sexuality is a shoe," he tells a supposedly suppressed homosexual at a nearby table. "You can't wear it on the wrong foot."

Anyone else seated close to the stage was liable to be dragooned into making paper-chains to help to decorate the room. Depending on his mood, this sardonic Lord of Misrule might strike up a rough-and-ready singalong of *New York, New York* or organise a chaotic kissing version of the Mexican Wave.

A sense of danger is never far away. He rants at journalists, his Uncle Fred and anyone reckless enough to try heckling him. Yet at the end he falls under the spell of a girl in the audience who helps him to make a jug on his ever-present potter's wheel. It was a nice jug, too, so he gave it to her as a token of his affection. Beneath the dysfunctional rage, Johnny just wants to be loved.

CLIVE DAVIS

Rough and unready enchantment

OPERA
The Magic Flute
Grand, Leeds

When is a revival not a revival? Most literally, I suppose, when a production all but expires in the process — and that is what seems to have happened at Leeds. Amid much lofty talk of the need to reinvent, to evolve, to break new ground, Annabel Arden has created an entirely new staging of *The Magic Flute* for Opera North.

Her enchanting New Age fairytale of 1994 has given way to a drab drama which seems stuck at the first day of rehearsal. Judging by the purely material aspects of Roswitha Gerlitz's new design, the shoestring on which it was made to hang would clearly not have extended to a respectable revival of the original production. But this, we are assured, is not the point. Arden was determined to reinvent; and it is imagination and insight, not money, which is lacking here.

No one, I am sure, would mind the simple corrugated-iron backdrop: it is deftly used and forms a chic, glinting surface for the lunar beauty of the Queen of Night (a valiant Cara O'Sullivan) and the golden sunrise of Sarastro (a stalwart Clive Bayley). And both the beastie made of chairs and old rope, and the temple portals formed by three fluorescent tubes, would grace any London gallery.

Even the market-stall fur-fabric animals with paper bags over their heads, even the grey cotton coats of Sarastro's brotherhood could be tolerated if the creatures inside them had any evident purpose in their brief lives. Neither group seems at all certain what to do with their space (how on earth were Monika Pagneux, movement, and two assistant directors usefully employed?). Nor do they seem to have any *raison d'être* in a staging which shows not a flicker of insight into the uses of enchantment, character, motivation, rite or ritual. Even the jokes fall flat in Arden's own translation of the spoken dialogue.

This rough and unready evening was eroded further still by the indisposition of Jamie MacDougall, though Neill Archer's Tamino is both sensitive and robust. Both Margaret Richardson and her understudy were too ill to sing: Richardson, however, mimed the part of Pamina while Susannah Glanville sang quite beautifully from a music stand in the wings. Eric Roberts was a somewhat threadbare Papageno, Margaret Preece his luscious Papagena.

As if chorus and orchestra were not working under sufficient duress, Brad Cohen, conducting, takes the entire opera at such a ludicrously fast speed that ensembles are gabbled and much of the orchestral playing garbled. I would like to think that things might improve once the show is on the road, but with both conductor and director riding shamelessly roughshod over Mozart, I am pessimistic.

HILARY FINCH

هكذا من الأصل

هكذا من الإصل

David Sinclair looks back on a 1997 of unexpected highs and lows – and the growth of a chilling trend

In 1997, Elton John's *Candle in the Wind* became the best-selling single ever; Geri and the Spice Girls sang on; Liam Gallagher and Oasis saw the wheels come off Britpop; and Prodigy — Keith Flint to the fore — attracted MPs' wrath

Highlights of the fast show

Writing on this page two weeks ago, my colleague Nick Kelly observed: "If there's one thing missing from the whole Oasis phenomenon, it's a sense of perspective." It is a point which could equally well apply to 1997 itself, a year in which the key players in British pop seemed to vacillate between pinnacles and troughs at wildly implausible extremes.

Naturally, Oasis were the most obvious example. With a mind-boggling first-day sales tally of 356,000 units, their third album, *Be Here Now*, became the fastest-selling album of all time. But by the end of the year, after the band had put in a series of increasingly workaday concerts, Chris Evans was seen trying to "revive" a copy of the album on his show *TFI Friday* with a defibrillator machine, confirming a growing feeling among many of those who had bought the record in such haste that they were now having to repent at leisure.

Evans found his own fortunes swinging in the opposite direction. He started the year by storming out of his much-coveted breakfast show slot at Radio 1, prompting some commentators to suggest that his glory days had gone the way of the Britpop phenomenon he had done so much to promote. But by the end of the year he had bought a controlling interest in Virgin Radio and emerged as a new media mogul, a heavier hitter than he had ever been as a mere DJ.

As predicted, Prodigy swept to the top of the British and American charts with their album *The Fat of the Land* and swept up awards wherever they were being offered, from *Q* magazine's to MTV's. However, the release of *Smack My Bitch Up* as a single, accompanied by an appropriately eye-catching billboard advertising campaign, prompted a wave of fierce indignation. The same people who had last year applauded the group for the subversive sound and imagery of *Firestarter* — of course it would not encourage people to start fires — could now be found standing shoulder to shoulder with conservative academic Roger Scruton and a grouping of Labour MPs in deploring the unhealthy effect of such an irresponsible message.

But if ever a sense of perspective was truly lacking it was in the media's response to the Spice Girls, the group which rode the roller-coaster of British pop in 1997 from top to bottom and are now, whisper it, on the way back up again. It is easy to see why people would want the Spice Girls to fail. They have been over-zealously marketed (which may be why they got rid of their manager) and they are definitely not cool.

But the way in which their second album, *Spiceworld*, has been written off as a commercial failure is pure fantasy. It has already sold 700,000 copies and will probably pass the million mark by the end of the year in Britain alone.

Their TV programme, *An Audience with the Spice Girls*, on December 1 attracted an audience of 11.8 million, about three times the average viewing figure for *Top of the Pops* and hardly the sort of response to an act for whom the bubble has supposedly burst.

With early reviews of their new movie, *Spiceworld*, which opens on Boxing Day, taking a surprisingly favourable tack, it looks as if the backlash to the Spice backlash is about to get underway. At the very least, it would be nice to think that the group's detractors might inject a dose of reality into future reporting of their antics.

Perspective was also in short supply following the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. In the pop world, as elsewhere, her demise prompted a strange sort of euphoric hysteria, enabling Elton John's remake of *Candle in the Wind* to become the biggest-selling single ever.

But the various colossal successes of 1997 concealed something of an impasse in mainstream rock. Sales of albums by Supergrass, Paul Weller, Sleeper and Black Grape (who have this week cancelled the remaining dates of their tour because of "nervous exhaustion") all fell short of expectations, as did Pulp's only single, *Help the Aged*. And apart from the Verve, an old band that suddenly found itself with the right album in the right place at the right time, and the delightful R&B of All Saints, there was little new activity to get excited about. Embrace may have spent the year being fêted as the new Oasis, but on the evidence of their lacklustre efforts so far, this seems somewhat far-fetched. And while there have been spectacular gains in drum and bass thanks to Roni Size, and the big beat sounds of the Chemical Brothers, Propellerheads et al, dance is still another matter.

Strange too has been the peculiar dearth of major album releases toward the end of this year. Apart from Celine Dion's *Let's Talk About Love*, the *Diana, Princess Of Wales Tribute* album and the usual *Best Of*... compilations, there has been virtually nothing to speak of since the end of October.

More depressingly, 1997 was bookended by two deaths. The demise of Michael Hutchence in December took place in the full glare of the media spotlight at its most garish. In January, though, Billy MacKenzie, the former singer of the Associates, took his own life under quieter circumstances — in his father's garden shed. It sounds a terrible thing to say, but along with plane crashes and drink and drug overdoses, suicide has become a very rock'n'roll way to go, especially since the demise of Kurt Cobain and (probably) Richey Edwards. But until the 1990s such tragedies had been few and far between: Nick Drake (1974), Ian Curtis (1980), Richard Manuel of the Band (1986), and that was about it. It is a chilling thought, but perhaps, as the highs of rock'n'roll get ever more frantically higher, the lows are also getting correspondingly lower.

Once lost, it is hard to restore a sense of perspective. The pop world has become like a junkie, hooked on its own hyperbole, demanding ever more extreme doses of instant success and failure, outrage and excess just to keep standing still.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, and Damon

Look boys, it's Christmas — time to kiss under the mistletoe and call off the damaging Blur-Oasis wars

Bruised but Damon Albarn and Blur snatched artistic victory from the jaws of chart defeat

Time to gather round, pop-cherubs, for a Christmas fairytale. This is a story about how two warring pop stars — Noel and Damon — should finally lay down their knuckle-dusters and their fighting man's talk, find a suitable sprig of mistletoe, and make up for Christmas.

The truth is that Noel and Damon have much and many things in common, and this is why the whole Blur/Oasis "war" started in the first place. From Oasis's inception they were constantly compared to Blur — both were indie bands who had been influenced by the Madchester "baggy" scene; were media-literate; had record collections that buckled the shelves with Beatles/Stones/Kinks/Who/Sex Pistols; and wanted to rule the world by the year 2000.

CAITLIN MORAN

When their "war" started, it was instigated by Damon, who believed that by moving the release date of *Country House* to the same day as the release of *Roll With It* he would roundly whup the Oasis behinds and prove himself to be ruler of all pop. *Country House* did beat *Roll With It* to the peak of the charts, which annoyed Noel, principally because he had a boyhood dream, as you do, of getting more No 1 hits than the Jam. Noel sulked, Damon was triumphal, and the nation, as one, said: "And that made *News At Ten*? Is ITV on moon-juice?"

However, Damon had badly miscalculated — Blur were at the crest of their fame arc, while Oasis were still ascending. By the end of the year, it was clear that Oasis had the throne in the Palace of Pop while Blur were uncomfortably perched on a foot-stool. Damon had risked everything and lost; Noel had forfeited the battle but won the war.

The results of this scrap have profoundly affected pop, and not entirely for the better. For Damon, it was a crushing, fist-clenching humiliation — like waking up the next morning having danced naked on a table the night before. He had staked his crown on literate, middle-class pop beating working-class rock, and lost. He was forced to abandon his world-beating ambitions, and return to stripped-down, left-field American/indie to consolidate a wavering fan base. Happily, on the subsequent album, *Blur*, this has turned out to be an artistic triumph.

However, winning the war was the worst thing that could have happened to Oasis, and to Noel Gallagher in particular. Having thrashed his enemy, Noel became puffed up on triumphalism; resulting in those embarrassing "This is history!" yells at Knebworth; and the self-satisfied bombast of *Be Here Now*. And this smugness still stems, in the main, from vanquishing Damon. The widely discussed significance of the *Be Here Now* artwork, which featured a calendar showing "21 August", was — I can exclusively reveal for the first time ever, as a special Christmas treat — because that was the date *Country House* beat *Roll With It* to No 1; but if Damon could be here now, in 1997, and try to go head-to-head with Oasis again, he'd lose. Just call me Miss Marple.

The truth is that Noel probably aspires to being Damon; and that Damon is jealous of Noel. Damon is a literate, middle-class bohemian, and Noel's big hero is John Lennon — a working-class rocker who became a middle-class, literate bohemian. Damon would love to connect with the masses and lose himself in euphoria, rather than constantly over-analyse everything he does — as Noel is able to. It's rather ironic that Oasis's most successful song to date is *Wonderwall*, the key lyric from which is: "There are many things that I would like to say to you/But I don't know how" — mourning Noel's lack of vocab; while Damon, who has too many words, chucked them all in the bin for Blur's most successful song, *Song 2*, which consists entirely of Damon mindlessly and joyfully yelling "Who-ho!/Well I feel heavy-metal".

Frankly, Damon and Noel have too much in common, and too many things to learn from each other, to remain enemies. I rather suspect that one day, not in the too distant future, they will gather in an empty bar, and talk until the sun rises. They'll never be pals, and they will both threaten to kill the other if either ever mentions it; but forever afterwards, when they are slagging each other off in idle moments, they will both have a twinkle in their eye.

And hopefully Damon will tip Noel the wink that no guitar solo should ever last more than 12 seconds — which is the greatest present Britain could ask for in 1998.

Speed garage low on fuel

POP ALBUMS

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Dreem Teem in Session Volume 2
(4 Liberty/Deconstruction 74321 549032)

SPEED garage is the improbable label for the dance trend currently sweeping the nation's clubs, and the Dreem Teem production/DJ collective comprising Timmi Magic, DJ Spoony, Mikee B and Luigi is the hottest name on the scene.

The sound is basically a mixture of house and swingbeat, a lolloping rhythm that introduces a sensual dynamic into the otherwise monotonously pneumatic beat that has dominated dance-floors for the past decade or so.

Dreem Teem in Session Volume 2 stitches together remixes of tracks by artists including Damage, Anthill Mob, Double 99 and New Horizon into a typically anonymous soundtrack.

Unlike drum and bass or the big beat sound of the Chemical Brothers, there is no serious attempt at musical innovation, and if this is as radical as it gets then I suspect speed garage will have died a quick and painless death before most people have had occasion to discover what exactly it is.

The Dreem Teem collective — hot now but for how long?

DELBERT McCLINTON
One of the Fortunate Few
(Curb/Rising Tide RTD 53042)

THE Nashville-based Texan Delbert McClinton has been on the road for the best part of 40 years — from the road-house circuit of the 1960s to President Clinton's inauguration ball in the 1990s — and if anybody knows how to win over an audience, he does. His easy-going blend of country, blues and rock'n'roll is always good company and invariably pleasant on the ear.

But, along with the populist touch, he has maintained the classic bar-band singer's knack of sounding more like other people than he does himself. It is a trait which tends to mar the tracks on *One of the Fortunate Few*, which features a host of guests including Vince Gill, John Prine and the ubiquitous B.B. King.

Old Weakness is thus a dead ringer for the Rolling Stones' *Honky Tonk Women*, *Sending Me Angels* sounds like the Band. *Too Much Stuff* bears more than a passing resemblance to Chuck Berry's *Too Much Monkey Business* and so on.

As a result, although they are nicely performed, the songs on this album lack an original mark of authority.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Cheery to the Finnish

JAZZ ALBUMS

TRIO TOYKEAT
Sisu
(EmArcy 536 580-2)

FORMED in 1988, the Finnish trio Toykeat, comprising pianist Iiro Rantala, bassist Eerik Siikasaari and drummer Rami Eskelinen, provides yet more evidence that continental Europe contains a wealth of comparatively neglected, but wholly original jazz talent.

Rantala's drily amusing sleevenotes provide a hint of the musical wit and charm of the album whose music they describe, but the sheer zest and exuberance — not to mention the range and power — of the trio's varied music still come as something of a shock.

Ragtime, tango, lush ballads, pop tunes, joyfully rumbustious romps, artful pastiches, Sibelius ... all are grist to the trio's mill, but whether alone or when joined by the violins of Jaakko and Pekka Kuusisto, they somehow manage to produce utterly distinctive and genuinely humorous but consistently adroit jazz.

JIM HALL
Panorama
(Telarc CD-83408)

WHEN Sonny Rollins formed a pianoless band for his 1962 comeback album *The Bridge*, one of its members was the guitarist Jim Hall. And what was Rollins's reason for approaching Hall? His "incredible harmonic sense" and sensitivity.

Thirty-five years later, Hall's quiet, understated mastery, both as subtle accompanist and thoughtful soloist, has been recognised by the award to him of Denmark's Jazzpar Prize — the "Jazz Oscar" — and this album contains nine good reasons why. Recorded live at the Village Vanguard, and featuring Hall (with bassist Scott Colley and drummer Terry Clarke) alongside a series of guests (pianists Geoff Keezer and Kenny Barron, alto player Greg Osby, flugelhorn player Art Farmer, trombonist Slide Hampton), it showcases a neat, elegant, unostentatiously versatile player meshing as faultlessly with his stellar partners as he did with Rollins all those years ago.

CHRIS PARKER

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1	(1)	Let's Talk About Love	Celine Dion (Epic)
2	(2)	Spiceworld	Spice Girls (Virgin)
3	(3)	Urban Hymns	Verve (Hut)
4	(4)	The Best of	Wham! (Epic)
5	(9)	All Saints	All Saints (London)
6	(10)	Like You Do	Lightning Seeds (Epic)
7	(7)	White on Blonde	Texas (Mercury)
8	(8)	Paint the Sky with Stars	Enya (WEA)
9	(6)	Greatest Hits	Eternal (EMI)
10	(11)	Lennon Legend	John Lennon (Parlophone)

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* Figure in brackets denotes last week's position

What you hear is what you get

LIVE GIG

WHEN you think how his contemporaries from the late 1970s have turned out — Elvis Costello, Joe Jackson, the Stranglers, Sting even — you would have to say that Paul Weller has kept himself well up to the mark, *David Sinclair writes*. At 39 he looks in good shape and, having produced some of his best work since the Jam in the 1990s he is still respected as an honorary member of the current generation of Britpop stars.

However, on the first of two nights at this temporary structure housing an audience of 6,000 on wasteland next to the long defunct Battersea Power Station, he was not a happy man. Like other acts to have played there this month, Weller had been forced to turn the volume down. "You can thank the bloody council for us having to play this quiet," he said after opening the set with brisk, wiry versions of *The Changingman* and *Friday Street*.

In truth, the sound was great, making up in clarity what it may have lacked in presence, and allowing the rich detail of Weller's songs to shine through. Weller, for his part, seemed content to vent his anger on the next number, *Peacock Suit*, which he ripped into with venomous relish, his gruff, soulful voice picking off the words like ducks in a shooting gallery: "I don't need a ship to sail in stormy weather/I don't need you to ruffle the feathers of my peacock suit."

Although very much the man in charge, Weller presented himself as part of the band, a lean but muscular four-piece featuring Steve White on drums, Yolanda Charles on bass and Matt Deighton on guitar, with Weller taking most of the guitar solos himself. From *Porcelain Gods* onwards they were joined by a three-piece string section, which contributed occasional dashes of colour to various songs, notably *Up In Suze's Room*, which came during a more relaxed acoustic section in the middle of the set.

There was no fuss or frivolity as they cantered into the home straight with *Sunflower*, *Mermaids* and *Into Tomorrow*, a tremendous volley of hits that confirmed Weller as one of the best mainstream rock songwriters Britain has ever produced and a diehard performer who, loud or quiet, always means business.

LONDON

CHORAL WONDERS: A weekend of song to make the spirit soar kicks off tonight as Jonathan Brown directs *Henry's Eight* in music for Advent and Christmas from the 14th and 15th centuries. This is followed by Stephen Layton conducting his splendid vocal ensemble. Polyphony with instrumental back-up by Canzona in two concerts. Handel's *Messiah* tomorrow and a performance of Corelli's Christmas Concerto and Bach's Christmas Oratorio on Sunday. With soloists Catherine Bott and Catherine Wyn-Rogers.
St John's, Smith Square, SW1 (0171-222 1061). All perfs, 7.30pm

ELTON JOHN: The enduring performer and songsmith with the unconventional sartorial taste ends his national tour here this weekend. Accompanied by a full band he performs material from his recent album, together with a host of his greatest hits.
Wembley Arena, Wembley, Middlesex (0181-900 1234). Tonight and tomorrow, 8pm

MASTERFUL MAHLER: James Levine, music director of the New York Met, conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus with a cast of internationally acclaimed soloists in Mahler's monumental Symphony No 8, the "Symphony of a Thousand". The line-up includes Jane Eaglen, Heidi Grant Murphy and Johan Botha.
Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-589 8212). Sunday, 7.30pm

SONG RECITAL: Longstanding collaborators Felicity Lott, Ann Murray and Graham Johnson team up for a feast of songs and duets by Schubert, Brahms, Fauré, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Kurt Weill. They are joined by the baritone Richard Jackson in a performance of Mozart's duet and trio from *Così fan tutte*.
Wigmore Hall, Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-935 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargie

ELSEWHERE

BLACKPOOL: The **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra** is joined by the RLP Choir and the Philharmonic Youth Choir for an evening of English traditional carols and Christmas music with seasonal readings from the works of Dickens and Laurie Lee. Handel, Walton and Vaughan Williams are on the programme, with audience participation invited for the carol singing.
Grand Theatre, Church Street, (01253 29372). Sunday, 7.30pm.

Les Dennis heads the cast of *Aladdin*, Cardiff

CARDIFF: Celebrity funny-man and gameshow host Les Dennis teams up with the former Olympic athlete Kriss Akabusi to head the cast of **Aladdin** — a traditional family pantomime written and directed by Tudor Davis who also appears as Widow Twankey.
New Theatre, Park Place (01222 878889). Opens tomorrow, 2.30pm and 7pm. Then 2.30pm and 7pm most days. From Jan 7: 1.30pm and 7pm most days. No perf Dec 25

KING'S LYNN: Two performances here for American director Francesca Zambello's critically acclaimed new production for the **Royal Opera** of Britten's first music-theatre work, *Paul Bunyan*. Richard Hickox conducts a cast led by Thomas Randle and Peter Coleman-Wright.
Corn Exchange, Tuesday Market Place (01553 764864). Tonight and tomorrow, 7.30pm.

NORTHAMPTON: Brian Blessed puts his comic talents to use as he gets to grips with the role of Hook in Malcolm Goddard's spectacular pantomime adaptation of J.M. Barrie's play, **Peter Pan**. Children's television presenter Kirsten O'Brien plays the boy who won't grow up.
Derngate Theatre, 19/21 Guildhall Road (01604 24811). Opens today, 3pm and 7pm. Tomorrow, 3pm, 7pm. Sun, 1pm, 5pm; Mon, 2pm, 7pm. Then Tue-Sun, various times. No perf Dec 25

LONDON GALLERIES

British Museum: Carter 1900-1939 (0171-323 8525) **Hayward:** Objects of Desire (0171-928 3144)
National: Hogarth's Marriage A-la-Mode (0171-747 2885) . **National Portrait:** Sir Henry Raeburn **Royal Academy:** Victorian Fairy Painting (0171-439 7438) **Tate:** Symbolism in Britain (0171-887 8000) . **V & A:** Hogarth After Hogarth (0171-938 8349/8441)

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only
◪ Some seats available
□ Seats at all prices

□ **ALL IN THE WRONG:** Paul Shelley recreates the role of Sir John Restless in Arthur Murphy's excellent 18th-century romp. One of this theatre's happiest rediscoveries back for Christmas.
Orange Tree, Clarence Street, Richmond (0181-940 3633). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mats Thur (Jan 8, 15), 2.30pm and Sat, 4pm. Additional mats tonight Dec 31, Jan 2, 4pm

■ **BUGSY MALONE:** The cast of the National Youth Music Theatre fire their splurge-guns in the spoof gangster musical derived from Alan Parker's movie. Jeremy Taylor directs.
Queens, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5041). Mon-Sat, 7.30; mats Wed and Sat, 2.30pm. Until Jan 17

◪ **A DELICATE BALANCE:** Eileen Atkins hauntingly chilling in welcome revival of Albee's play about marriage, parenthood and neighbourliness. Maggie Smith plays the drunk sister.
Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (0171-930 8800). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mats Wed and Sat, 3pm

◪ ***THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR:*** Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDiarmid as the devious Mayor in Gogol's matchless satiric comedy. See review, page 32
Almeida Theatre, 108 Almeida Street, N1 (0171-359 4404). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 3pm. Until January 31

◪ **HAMLET:** Alex Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Derbhle Crotty as Ophelia, Paul Freeman as Claudius.
Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Tonight and tomorrow, 7.15pm; mat tomorrow, 2pm. In repertoire

□ ***AN IDEAL HUSBAND:*** Return of Peter Hall's enjoyable production, brimful of deceptions. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward, and Kate O'Mara as the svelte troublemaker.
Gielgud, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (0171-494 5065). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mats Thur 3pm and Sat, 4pm

◪ **THE MAGISTRATE:** Ian Richardson plays the much harassed hero in a fitfully funny revival of Pinero's farce. Cast includes Graham Crowden, Frank Middlemass, John Padden.
Savoy, The Strand, WC2 (0171-836 8888). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mats Wed and Sat, 3pm

□ **MUTABILITIE:** Trevor Nunn directs new Frank McGuinness play, set in Ireland in 1598. Patrick Malahide, Anton Lesser, Aisling O'Sullivan play characters that include the poet Spenser and a playwright named William.
National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 2252). Tonight and tomorrow, 7.30pm; mat tomorrow, 2.30pm. In rep

□ **SATURDAY NIGHT:** World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.) Set in Brooklyn in 1929: love v money, pretence v reality. Music and lyrics by Sondheim, book by Julius and Philip Epstein.
Bridewell, Bride Lane, EC4 (0171-936 3456). Tue-Sat, 7.30pm; mats Sat and Sun, 3.30pm. Until January 24.

□ **STEPPING OUT:** Musical version of Richard Harris's hit play (music and lyrics by Denis King and Mary Stewart David). Julia McKenzie directs Liz Robertson and her hopeful hoofers.
Albery, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-369 1730). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mats Thur, 3pm and Sat, 4pm.

◪ **TREASURE ISLAND:** Tom Georgeson straps himself into the wooden leg for Neil Bartlett's adaptation of Stevenson's classic tale of pirates, doubloons, cutlasses and a longing for toasted cheese.
Lyric, King Street, W6 (0181-741 2311). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm (except Dec 31, 6pm), mats Sat, 2.30pm and Dec 23,24,26,31, 2.30pm; mats Dec 9,11,16, Jan 8,14, 1.30pm. Until January 17

LONG RUNNERS

◪ **Cats:** New London (0171-405 0072) . . ◪ **Grease:** Cambridge (0171-494 5080) . ◪ **Les Misérables:** Palace (0171-434 0909) . . ◪ **Miss Saigon:** Drury Lane (0171-494 5400) . ■ **The Phantom of the Opera:** Her Majesty's (0171-494 5400) □ **Smokey Joe's Cafe:** Prince of Wales (0171-839 5987) □ **Starlight Express:** Apollo Victoria (0171-416 6054) □ **The Woman in Black:** Fortune (0171-836 2238)

Ticket information supplied by Society of London Theatre

NEW RELEASES

CLOSE-UP: Impoverished man poses as an Iranian film director. Fascinating and humane drama, based on truth, from Abbas Kiarostami.
ICA (0171-930 3647) **Rio** (0171-254 6677)

◆ **GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE** (U): Tarzanesque hero finds romance in America. Passable romp based on the TV cartoon series, with Brendan Fraser and Leslie Mann. Director, Sam Weisman.
Greenwich (0181-235 3005) **Odeons: Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** (0181-970 6015) **UCI Whiteleys** (0990 888990) **Warner** (0171-437 4343)

◆ **HOME ALONE 3** (PG): Another Christmas, another kid left alone to fight intruders. Unappealing sequel with a different tyke (Alex D. Linz) and a tougher edge. Director, Raja Gosnell.
ABC Baker Street (0171-935 9772) **Odeon Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **UCI Whiteleys** (0990 888990) **Virgin Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** (0181-970 6015)

KISS ME, GUIDO (15): Crowd-pleasing comedy about gays and straights in New York. With Nick Scotti, Anthony Barrile. Director, Tony Vitale.
Metro (0171-437 0757) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121)

◆ **PRINCE VALIANT** (PG): Spirited nonsense set in Arthurian times, with Stephen Moyer, Katherine Heigl and Joanna Lumley. Director, Anthony Hickox.
Warner (0171-437 4343)

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol ◆) on release across the country

CURRENT

◆ **BEAN** (PG): Rowan Atkinson's bumbler is let loose in LA. Jokes galore, some sentiment, no subtlety. With Peter MacNicol and (briefly) Burt Reynolds.
Odeon Mezzanine (0181-315 4215)

◆ **COP LAND** (15): Lazy sheriff ponders what to do about corrupt cops. Flawed but absorbing drama, with Sylvester Stallone, Harvey Keitel, Robert De Niro. Director, James Mangold.
Greenwich (0181-235 3005) **Odeons: Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Plaza** (0990 888990) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **UCI Whiteleys** (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** (0181-970 6015) **Warner** (0171-437 4343)

◆ **THE FULL MONTY** (15): Unemployed steelworkers strip for cash. Bouncy British comedy, with Robert Carlyle, Tom Wilkinson, Mark Addy. Director, Peter Cattaneo.
Barbican (0171-638 8891) **Clapham Picture House** (0171-498 3323) **Empire** (0990 888990) **Odeon Mezzanine** (0181-315 4215) **Screen/Baker Street** (0171-935 2772) **Screen/Green** (0171-226 3520) **UCI Whiteleys** (0990 888990) **Virgin Chelsea** (0171-352 5096)

I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER (18): Reckless teenagers get their comeuppance. Workable horror film from the writer of *Scream*. With Jennifer Love Hewitt, Freddie Prinze Jr. Director, Jim Gillespie.
Odeons: Kensington (0181-315 4214) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Plaza** (0990 888990) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **UCI Whiteleys** (0990 888990) **Virgins: Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Trocadero** (0181-970 6015) **Warner** (0171-437 4343)

◆ **TOMORROW NEVER DIES** (12): Pierce Brosnan's James Bond combats an evil media mogul (Jonathan Pryce). Set pieces thrills, but little sparkle. With Michelle Yeoh and Teri Hatcher. Director, Roger Spottiswoode.
ABC Tottenham Court Road (0171-636 6148) **Barbican** (0171-638 8891) **Clapham Picture House** (0171-498 3323) **Curzon Mayfair** (0171-369 1720) **Greenwich** (0181-235 3005) **Notting Hill Coronet** (0171-727 6705) **Odeons: Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Leicester Square** (0181-315 4215) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Screen/Baker Street** (0171-935 2772) **UCI Whiteleys** (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636)

Plot defers to slide rule

Torvill and Dean
NEC Birmingham

Ever since they won their gold medal at the 1984 Winter Olympics in Sarajevo, Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean have etched themselves on our national consciousness with the magic of their ice dancing. They have been a working couple for more than 20 years, but if the romance of their artistic partnership is starting to fade, it certainly doesn't show. They still move in perfect harmony, with a physical and emotional rapport that is dazzling. And a good thing it is too. Because without that special magic their new show, *Ice Adventures*, would be an even bigger disappointment.

The show was choreographed by Torvill, Dean and Andris Toppe (who also directs). The fourth member of the creative team is Robin Driscoll, co-writer of television's *Mr Bean*, who worked on the "concepts" of *Ice Adventures* with the other three. Concept is not this production's strong point.

Conceived as a series of unrelated episodes designed to provide the audience with a variety of easily digested moods, *Ice Adventures* aims low. It makes no attempt at drama or scenic development; as theatre it's a bore. Even the visual comedy falls short of reasonable expectation, effective when sweetly humorous, but limp whenever broad strokes are called for.

The episodes are arbitrary. The first is set in a busy train station with couples meeting and parting (fun with luggage); the second features dancing sea creatures in an underwater ballet. Winter Games evokes the spirit of the Olympics (sporting and not so sporting) and New Year's Eve, set in a "big city nightspot", provides the dancey finale.

Torvill and Dean are the highlight of each segment, although the really flash manoeuvres are left to younger members of the cast. The stars from Nottingham have a company of fine skaters to support them — one, the exciting Richard Swenning, is a truly eye-catching performer.

Torvill still covers the ice most gracefully, charging into the choreography with an undiminished thrill. But there is too little scope for expression in her upper body: neck and shoulders are stiff. Dean, meanwhile, has been taking his ballet lessons to heart. He feels the impulse in every part of his body, a supremely polished mover who puts it all together — be it jazz or slapstick — with consummate style and ease.

You do, however, get the feeling that Dean the choreographer is frustrated by the limitations of working on skates. His recent experience with English National Ballet, for whom he made *Encounters*, must have opened his eyes to a wider spectrum of movement possibilities. But any desire to feed the slide and twirl of ice dancing with the fertiliser of classical ballet eventually confronts one inescapable reality: there is only so much you can do with the body when your feet are underscored by blades.

DEBRA CRAINE

DEE CONWAY

Making magic: Christopher Dean and Jayne Torvill in their new show, *Ice Adventures*

CONCERTS: The stars come out in force for an anniversary show and a forceful Verdi Requiem

Crass touches mar the band's big night

RPO Jubilee
Albert Hall

WHEN he formed the last of his orchestras after the Second World War, Sir Thomas Beecham merely wanted the cream of available players. Now, 50 years on, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, which has had to fight almost continuously for its existence in recent years, was able to celebrate its jubilee with a concert at charity-ticket prices, to benefit itself and the Elton John Aids Foundation, helped by starry soloists and Vanessa Redgrave to do the votes of thanks.

The audience filling the boxes was the kind that had to be told over the PA system who was coming next, without being left to work it out from plentiful printed notes and photographs. Goodness knows who they might otherwise have thought were the Labèque Sisters, Katia and Marielle, who clattered their way insensitively through Mozart's Two-Piano Concerto, K365, and surprised us only by their garb. The programme having acknowledged their "beautiful ballgowns" by Escada, they chose instead to wear tailored jackets over black leggings.

At least Sir Simon Rattle's mop of curls could hardly be mistaken but, so far from being the evening's principal conductor, he confined himself to Elgar's *Enigma Variations*. He presented the "friends pictured within" like an album of musical sepia portraits for which an extra rehearsal session would not have gone amiss in securing better balance of textures.

The second part brought what Beecham would have called the "lollipops". First up was a Singapore violinist, Lee-Chin Siow, slim and svelte in a scarlet sheath. She teased out the glitter of Sarasate's *Carmen Fantasy* with aplomb. Her volatile conductor was José Collado, who gave way to Marcello Rota to introduce the easy tenor of Andrea Bocelli. His vision was impaired from birth, and he lost his sight altogether at the age of 12 after a football accident. He sang a beguiling *La Serenata* by Tosti and returned for a smooth but charmless *La donna e mobile*, which he delivered a second time as a loudly demanded encore.

Before that, Montserrat Caballé advanced like a galleon under full sail to sing three numbers, in which she miraculously managed to capture the sense of a young ingenue in *O mio babbino caro* from Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and the lilting song of Paloma from Barbieri's zarzuela, *El barberillo de Lavapies*. But then she demeaned her stature by foisting on us a tacky tune by Vangelis, for which she herself had written English lyrics entitled *Like A Dream*. The *Brindisi* from *La Traviata*, listed in the programme, never materialised — for which I am unsure whether to feel regret or relief.

NOEL GOODWIN

Philharmonia/Levine
Festival Hall

THE second of James Levine's concerts with the Philharmonia Orchestra on Wednesday — sold out long ago — was always destined to be an event. In the first place, this performance of the Verdi Requiem marked the 40th anniversary of the Philharmonia Chorus. Secondly, it was the final concert of the long-serving bass player and former chairman, Rodney Stewart.

It should, futhermore, have featured Luciano Pavarotti in an all-star line-up of soloists. He was too ill to travel, we were told, but his replacement was the no less media-friendly Roberto Alagna. To cap it all, television cameras and royalty were in attendance, creating a buzz of anticipation even before the baton was raised.

Almost any well-drilled performance of the Verdi Requiem — and the Philharmonia and City of Birmingham Symphony Choruses rehearsed by James Kelleher formed a massive but commendably responsive vocal corpus — is likely to make an impression. Levine hasn't been at the helm of the New York Metropolitan Opera for 25 years without acquiring a theatrical flair, and he pointed up contrasts with a practised ear for histrionic effect. The fury of the *Dies Irae*, for example, was intoxicating.

When the score is marked "tutta forza", as in the final pages of the *Libera me*, Levine knows what to do; when more subtlety is called for, he is often found wanting. It was not until an hour into the piece that a fine shading of the *Agnus Dei* suggested anything out of the ordinary.

The finest inspirations, in fact, came neither from the podium nor from the star tenor — Alagna's contributions were marked by coarse tone and lumpy line — but from the soprano soloist, Renée Fleming. Her phrasing was wonderfully expressive and she was able to suggest also the terror of imminent death and judgment in the *Libera me* with the agitated delivery of her *parlando* opening.

The mezzo and bass soloists, Luciana d'Intino and Roberto Scandiuzzi, were not able to match that, but both managed to sustain a sensitively drawn musical line while invoking the sense of mystery.

BARRY MILLINGTON

ART GALLERIES

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THEATRES

THEATRES

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ALBERY 369 1730/344 4444 "You'll be dancing on air" D Mi STEPPING OUT THE NEW MUSICAL 'Tapping a rich vein of joy' Times 'IT'S THE FULL MONTY WITH TAPPERS-GLITTERING' D.Mir 'JUST WONDERFUL' Int H Trib Eves 8pm Mats Thur 3pm Sat 4pm Special Xmas Matinees Tues 23, Wed 24, Tue 30 Dec, Fri 2 Jan

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6003 cc 344 4444 'Dame Judi Dench is triumphant in David Hare's masterpiece' D Mail AMY'S VIEW Directed by RICHARD EYRE Prevs 5 Jan. Opens 14 Jan

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6004/ 420 0000 (24hrs/no fee) THE BOYS IN THE BAND by MART CROWLEY Must End Sat 20th Dec! Eves 8pm, Mats Thur & Sat 3pm

APOLLO 24hr cc 0171 494 5070 cc 0171 344 4444 (bkg fee) Grps 0171 494 5454 BEN ELTON'S POPCORN "Electrifying...bloodcurdling comedy...I recommend it with relish" John Peters Sun Times "The West End has found its resident Playwright" IOS Mon-Sat 8.00pm Mats Wed 3.00pm Sat 4.00pm

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APOLLO VICTORIA cc 0171 416 6055 cc 24hrs 0171 344 4444/0171 420 0000 Grps 416 6075/413 3321 Andrew Lloyd Webber's STARLIGHT EXPRESS THE FASTEST SHOW ON EARTH White knuckle runs 19.45 daily Tue & Sat 3pm Tickets from £12.50

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The deficit is falling and economy growing, but job creation is the biggest battle. **Giles Tremlett** introduces a two-page report from Madrid

Winning the war against inflation and dole queues

After spending much of the 1990s in the doldrums, Spain's economy is enjoying the kind of recovery that would make it the envy of Europe were it not also accompanied by chronic unemployment.

José María Aznar's conservative Government has made liberalisation and deficit-cutting the cornerstones of an economic programme that seeks sustained growth that's at least beginning to trim the country's 21 per cent unemployment rate.

The austerity measures have done little to weaken Señor Aznar, even though he leads a minority Government, because he has made Spanish membership of European Monetary Union his main economic aim.

Spaniards of almost all political colours are keen Europeans. All the major parties agree that membership of monetary union is vital to the country's economic aspirations, even if tough measures are needed to get it past the conditions for entry. Few economists would have predicted it two years ago, but there is now little doubt that Spain will qualify comfortably.

Señor Aznar's main target has been the public deficit. This has been slashed from 6.6 per cent in 1995 to what is expected to be slightly less than 3 per cent this year. He aims to get it below 2 per cent before the millennium.

Restrictions on government spending, including a freeze on civil service pay, have been crucial to meeting these targets. Increased economic growth, which reached an estimated 3 per cent this year, and a raft of privatisations have contributed greatly. Inflation has also been tamed, dipping below 2 per cent earlier this year. The Bank of Spain has felt confident enough to cut interest rates from 6.25 to 4.75 per cent.

Señor Aznar has now decided to ease the public spending belt, allowing it to grow by 3.2 per cent in 1998. Even then, the Prime Minister, worried that he might look too keen to spend, trimmed £100 million from the budget before finally presenting it to Parliament.

"This is no longer a budget for the euro, it is a budget for recovery," Finance Minister Rodrigo Rato declared when he presented the Government's plans for 1998. Señor Rato's predictions for 1998 included 3.4 per cent growth and a 2.4 per cent deficit.

> 'This is no longer a budget for the euro, it is a budget for recovery'

Consumers, initially suspicious of the export-led recovery, finally started to dip into their pockets in 1997. Business is optimistic. A December poll of the country's major companies by *El País* newspaper found that 83 per cent expected to increase sales next year.

Señor Aznar has proved a keen privatiser. Recent sell-offs have included large parts of monopoly phone company Telefónica, petrochemical giant Repsol, electricity supplier Endesa and steelmaker Aceralia. These flotations have had the additional effect of encouraging a number of successful private companies, notably the Telepizza restaurant chain and the Adolfo Domínguez clothing stores, to float shares on Madrid's stock market, La Bolsa.

Señor Aznar's Government has been clearly interventionist in the media sector, where a bitter political battle is being fought between two new pay-per-view digital television providers, Via Digital and Canal Satélite Digital. The Government controls a stake in Via Digital through state broadcaster TVE. Its attempts to favour Via Digital against Canal Satélite Digital, owned by the pro-Socialist media magnate Jesús de Polanco, have earned it warnings from the European Commission.

Analysts predict that Señor Aznar has a lot more work to do before he can claim to have knocked the economy properly into shape. The head of the Prime Minister's budget office, José Barea, admits that both the state pensions scheme and the social security system are expensive time bombs waiting to explode.

Labour reform is the other great challenge. A deal between unions and employers in April went some way to making the labour market more flexible in a country that boasted the EU's most expensive redundancies. These had caused employers to shy away from contracting people for permanent jobs, leaving a third of workers on temporary contracts. Señor Rato has recognised that further reform is inevitable.

A combination of economic expansion and labour deregulation is chipping away at unemployment, with dole queues being shortened by 6 per cent over a year. At 21.55 per cent, it remains Señor Aznar's biggest challenge.

JULIAN MARTIN/AP

Flashback to 1996: civil servants protest in Barcelona at a freeze on pay and cutbacks

Share selloff frenzy for the small investor

PRIVATISATION

Although many Spaniards are currently suffering a nasty strain of flu, the real epidemic is popular capitalism infected by the current wave of privatisations.

Analysts have been staggered by the enthusiasm of private investors in Spain who have snapped up government offerings with a gusto normally reserved for tickets in *El Gordo*, Spain's gigantic £1 billion Christmas lottery.

This year the Government will have raised £7 billion from 17 sell-offs in Spain and three in South America. The biggest offering was completed in September with the sale of 26 per cent of Endesa, an electrical utility, which raised a record £2.8 billion, with 65 per cent coming from small Spanish investors.

"It was the largest ever offering in Spain, and the seventh biggest ever in Europe," boasts Emilio Saracho, managing director of Santander Investment, part of Banco Santander, which handled the launch.

Santander Investment has pioneered successful state sales since 1985, with increasingly larger offerings. It has 3,000 employees with 300 dedicated full time to equities, comfortably matching better-known London houses. Señor Saracho, 42, said there were two million applications from Spaniards for Endesa shares and he reckons there is a hard core of some 300,000 regular buyers in Spain.

These days most Spanish banks are festooned with details of share offers. Private buyers snatched up 73 per cent — a new record — of part of the first tranche in Aceralia, a steel group of which most of them had probably never heard.

Analysts credit shrewd work by the Government, and in particular the Sepi state holding group, in tailoring issues for timely release as well as indirect help from the Maastricht treaty. Spain's ardent ambition to comply with the Maastricht criteria to join the first EU states with the euro has brought about a reduction in both interest rates and the budget deficit.

Superficially, the state auction could be seen as an easy way — prohibited by Maastricht — of directly reducing the state deficit. But, cunningly, the funds raised by Sepi go towards bailing out loss-making companies in, say, shipping and mining, thus eliminating subsidies.

The Government says the privatisation programme, involving about 40 companies, is basically aimed at making industries more efficient, guaranteeing their futures and, hopefully, more jobs for Europe's longest dole queue. And the reason why the new shareholder culture has mushroomed is because lower interest rates, as stipulated by Maastricht, have dictated a switch from fixed-rate bonds to more profitable equities.

Just afew years ago only about 10 or 15 per cent of sell-offs attracted the public, but now private demand has outstripped that from institutional investors. But Señor Saracho points out that some of the new Spanish equities have more to offer the likes of foreign pension funds than most other European stocks.

"Many of the privatisations, such as Telefónica, Repsol [the petroleum group] and Endesa, constitute an indirect but safe play in Latin America," he says. "It's a good way of buying solid investments with a good name in Europe, but with potentially exciting exposure across the Atlantic.

"In Spain the market for electricity is growing by 1 or 2 per cent a year, whereas in South America, where Endesa now controls Enersis of Chile, it is 7 per cent."

Next February Santander expects to be global co-ordinator for 28 per cent of Argentaria, the banking group, the last 20 per cent of Endesa in May and may be later involved with the sale of 52 per cent of Tabacalera, the state tobacco monopoly.

EDWARD OWEN

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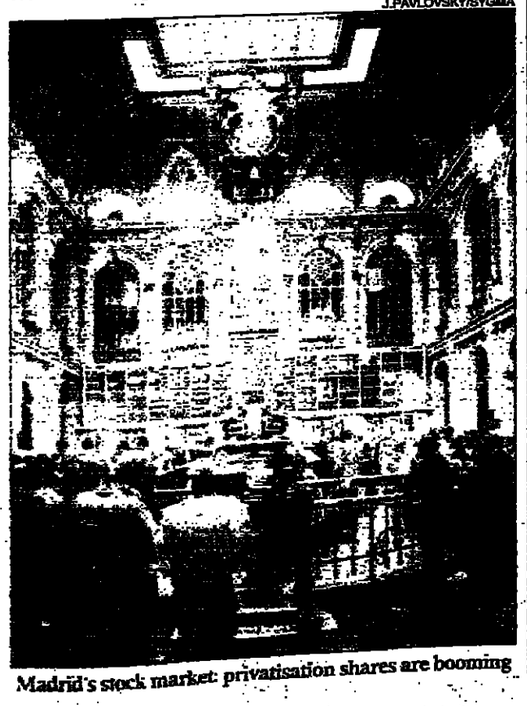

Madrid's stock market: privatisation shares are booming

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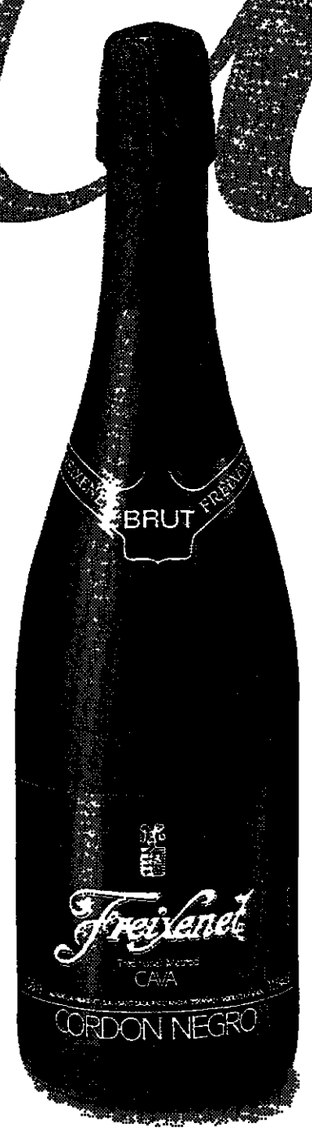

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Giles Tremlett looks at the strengths of Spain's new leaders as the ghosts of 40 years of Franco's dictatorship are being laid to rest

Aznar's conservatives move leftwards

POLITICS

Under José María Aznar, the conservative Prime Minister, Spain is living through a period of political novelty. Before his Popular Party's election victory in March last year most Spaniards had no *experience of life under a democratic* right-wing Government.

Bitter memories of nearly 40 years of dictatorship under General Franco had caused Spaniards to shun the Right after democracy was re-established when the *caudillo* died in 1975. Señor Aznar's election win finally broke the taboo.

One of his main challenges, then, has been to chase away the ghosts of the past and prove that there is no reason to be afraid of his right-wing Government. The Prime Minister has taken great pains to do this. He has moved his party towards the centre and has strenuously avoided confrontation with two of his potentially most powerful adversaries, the trade unions and regionalist parties.

In the latter case he has little choice. His victory was not as resounding as the polls had predicted. The Popular Party fell short of winning an absolute majority and had to form a minority Government supported by regionalist parties from Catalonia, the Basque country and the Canary Islands.

This left Señor Aznar's Government hostage to the Catalan regional Prime Minister, Jordi Pujol. A withdrawal of support by Señor Pujol's regionalist Convèrgencia i Unió Party would immediately force fresh elections.

The alliance between Señor Aznar, Señor Pujol and the other regionalist parties is, in many ways, unnatural. Where the Popular Party is naturally centralist, the *regionalist parties want power* devolved to Spain's 17 autonomous regional governments. This is especially the case with the Catalans and the Basque Nationalist Party.

Señor Aznar has had to take a crash course in the political and cultural desires of his new allies. He has satisfied demands for decentralisation by speeding up the transfer of powers to regional governments. This, for example, has seen the Basques gain increased power over tax rates, while the Catalans have won a financing deal.

The Prime Minister has found

Socialist leader Alumnia

plenty of common ground with his allies on the economic front. This has been especially so with Señor Pujol. His party, which represents Catalonia's industrious middle classes, puts the economy ahead of regionalist demands.

A common desire to join the European single currency has provided the basic cement for Señor Aznar's alliance with the regionalists. *Spain's booming economy*, now growing at 3 per cent, and the Government's liberal approach to it have added further glue.

But tensions remain. The Basques, for example, do not see eye to eye with Javier Mayor Oreja, the Interior Minister, and dislike his policy towards armed separatist group Eta, which continues to carry out up to a dozen assassinations each year. They want dialogue and a softening of the prisons policy, which sends Eta activists to jails outside the Basque country.

Señor Mayor Oreja has ruled out talks with Eta's political ally, the Herri Batasuna Party, until the violence stops. Eta has responded by targeting Popular Party members. Its June kidnapping and murder of Miguel Angel Blanco, a young Popular Party councillor from the Basque town of Ermua, brought millions out in protest. It also brought promises of a tougher line on Eta. Señor Mayor Oreja's calm, firm handling of the situation has won him widespread support and made him Señor Aznar's most *popular minister*.

Relations with the Convèrgencia Party are relatively stable, and Señor Pujol's support looks set to hold up through 1998. But here, too, there are occasional flare-ups. The most recent arose over teaching the humanities in schools.

The proposal by education minister Esperanza Aguirre that schools should teach "the unitary nature" of Spanish history and geography caused outrage in Señor Pujol's regional government, which sees little historical unity between Spain and Catalonia.

The much-heralded clash with the trade unions has failed to take place, partly because the Prime Minister has renounced many of the labour and social security *reforms that his advisers say are* urgent. It is also because unions

ERIC VANDEVILLE/FRANK SPOONER

Ploughing ahead: although he leads a minority Government, José María Aznar's policies and diplomacy are paying dividends

preferred to reach an agreement with employers allowing for a degree of liberalisation of the labour market rather than confront the Government while it pursued the popular goal of qualifying for monetary union.

Señor Aznar's relatively gentle first 18 months in office have been helped by upheavals in the main opposition party, the Spanish Socialist Workers Party. Under the charismatic leadership of Felipe González, the Socialists had held government for 13 years until 1996.

Señor González was eventually brought down by security and corruption scandals, which are only just beginning to be processed through the sluggish court system. In the first big case to reach a conclusion, six former members of the party's finance team were jailed for illegal fund-raising.

The Socialists, who have a new leader in Joaquin Alumnia, are thus still on the defensive. They will remain so while the courts investigate further corruption cases and the role Señor González's Government played in a dirty undercover war against Eta suspects in which 28 people died.

Despite the apparent successes of his first few months in government, many Spaniards still do not warm to Señor Aznar, who rarely beats Señor González in polls on personal popularity. This has much to do with the grey, introverted image of *this 44-year-old former tax inspec*tor, which contrasts strongly with his predecessor's charisma.

The Left not only did not believe Señor Aznar would become Prime Minister, it also refused to believe that, if he did manage to get elected, he would be a success. Yet his Popular Party continues to lead the polls..

Spain, it seems, has laid to rest the ghosts of the Right.

TOURISM

£44m Parador boost for new visitor boom

The impact of the euro on Spain's largest industry — tourism — is certain to be considerable, *Edward Owen writes*. The minister responsible for the sector, José Manuel Fernández Norniella, is vigorously engaged in trying to brace businessmen and government officials in readiness for its introduction.

Since Spain cannot maintain the benefits of favourable exchange rates, it will have to be more competitive, with the emphasis on quality and value for money. From 1999, many EU tourists, getting used to the euro in their own countries, will for the first time know exactly how much anything costs in Spain without having to resort to a pocket calculator.

Tourism, which accounts for 10.4 per cent of gross domestic product, continues to break all records, but the new regime responsible for national policy is far from complacent. The Treasury has earmarked £4.6 million to tell the industry what the *euro is all about. But tourist* businesses are seeking more money to offset the additional costs they anticipate of launching the euro, including loss of foreign exchange commissions.

Señor Fernández Norniella, 52, Secretary of State for Commerce, Tourism and Smaller Businesses, has also established various bodies to co-ordinate tourism policies after their devolution to the regions by the previous Socialist adminstration. He has reversed the latter's policy to sell part of the state-run Parador hotel chain. This year tourism is expected to bring £15 billion to Spain. Last year, the country received 62 million foreign visitors, of whom 41.4 million stayed overnight and are therefore categorised as tourists. Nearly 60 per cent of tourists came on package holidays.

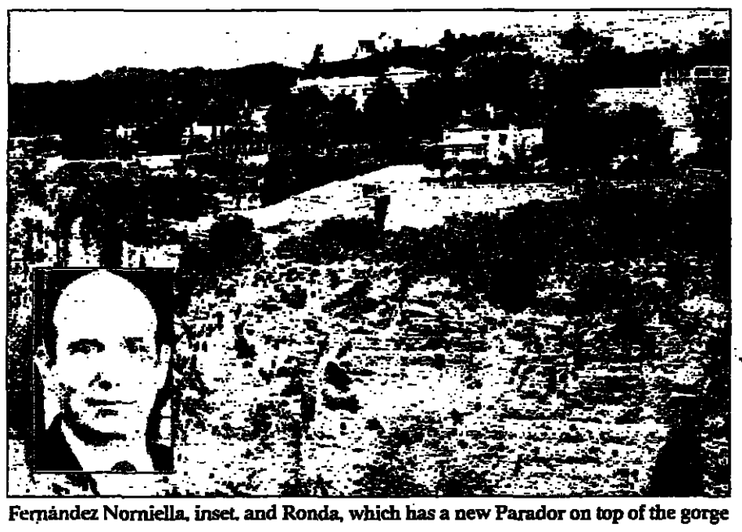
"The important difference between our policy and that of the previous Government is that we are maximising collaboration and communication between Madrid and tourist sectors at all regional levels," says Señor Fernández Norniella. "At a Madrid congress of all regions and tourist enterprises we adopted 23 concrete conclusions which will be acted upon."

One concerns the impact on tourism of the euro in 1999. Visitors who drive will be pleased to know that standard signposting is planned across the country. This should eliminate the need for knowing the often incomprehensible Basque names for destinations in northern Spain or realising that a sign in Galician saying "A Coruña" literally means "The Corunna" rather than "To Corunna".

Tourist chiefs also want to remedy one of the most frequent complaints about Spanish tourist offices: that they hardly ever carry literature on regions other than their own. One of the worst offenders is the tourist counter at Madrid's airport and the city's bureaux. Hopefully, officials will also improve often woeful standard of translations.

The Socialist Government had plans to sell off at least some of Spain's fine state-run chain of Parador hotels, mostly in restored castles, monasteries and convents in areas of great beauty. Señor Fernández Norniella has not only reversed that decision but will invest £44 million to the year 2000 in opening new Paradors in historic buildings and further restoration of existing gems.

"This year the Paradors have beaten all records, and the trend is the same for next year," he says. "They are unique to Spain. There's no other country that can offer a hotel chain with such a combination of artistic and cultural heritage. Paradors are a good way of preserving our rich inheritance and they attract a special type of tourism, often bringing business to rural areas." Next year discounts will be offered on various routes linking the Parador network.



Fernández Norniella, inset, and Ronda, which has a new Parador on top of the gorge

WINE

Tasty sales figures as quality rises

Export demand for Spanish wines has risen since overall quality has dramatically improved, *Edward Owen writes*. Spain has finally produced a good argument against EU bureaucrats who have ordered the country to rip up vines from 1,300 square miles, an area larger than Luxembourg.

Spain has more land dedicated to the grape than any other country in the world, but is the third-ranked wine producer, behind Italy and France. In the past six years the value of wine exports from Spain have increased by nearly 60 per cent and last year were worth £600 million, with Britain a major customer.

Jesús Flores, president of the Spanish Association of Sommeliers, says there has been a revolution in Spanish wine-making: "Spanish oenologists are following consumer demand. Tastes have changed. *Tintos* [red wines] are more corpulent, more suave, with less tannin and more of a fruity flavour. "Great wines are designed on the vine and new clones of grapes are being grafted in Spain. But the great strength of Spanish wine is still the relation between price and quality."

He says that *tintos* now have more body. "We are looking for more colour and the fruity character is more important, as is the appropriate choice of wood for ageing in barrels. More importance is now attached to fermentation of whites in the barrel and self-fermenting yeasts. The process is more sophisticated than before."

Of *cavas*, Spain's *méthode champenoise* sparkling wines, the best of which taste as good as champagnes but are cheaper, Señor Flores, comments: "The major brands have set aside their war with each other and are consolidating their *cavas* into sparkling wines of real quality."

Almost all *cavas* are produced in Catalonia, northeast Spain, mainly from local Parellada, Macabeo and Xarello grapes. The two biggest producers are Codorniu and Freixenet. The latter exports the most.

Manuel Duran, vice-president of Freixenet, says he exported 55 million bottles in the first nine months of this year, a six million increase on the same period last year. Britons uncorked nearly five million bottles of the fizz.

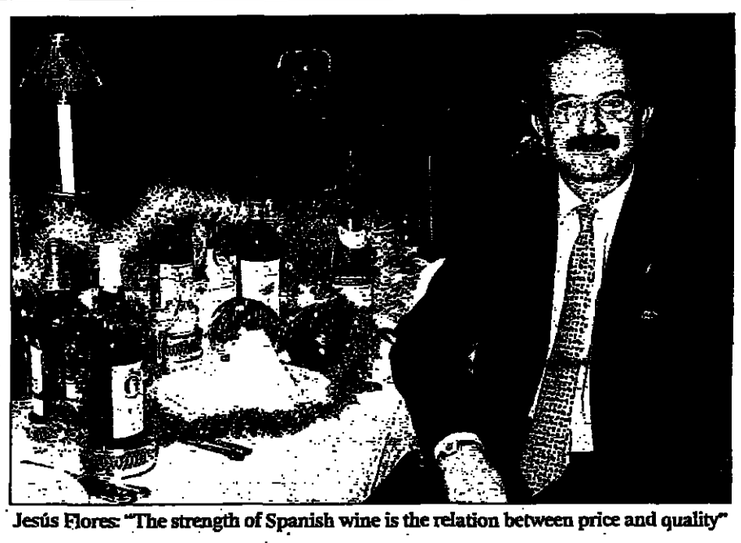
Señor Duran approves of Britons and Germans drinking his *cava* all year round, complaining that Spaniards really seem to drink it only at Christmas.

José Ferrer, 72, president of the family-owned Freixenet, has just announced a £21 million expansion plan for his company, which had a turnover of £187.5 million last year. The economic climate was good for expansion. He says: "Profits are greater. Consumption has moderately increased in the domestic market and exports have been extraordinary. Interest rates have dropped, as have the costs of raw materials."

The bodega, located in the *cava* capital of San Sadurni, 40 miles south of Barcelona, was founded in 1889 and first produced *cava* in 1915. The huge cellars go down seven storeys and contain 100 million bottles.

Señor Flores, who is also a director of Spain's largest wine club, Vinoselección, which has 33,000 members, recommends the following for those who want a Spanish flavour at Christmas. As an *aperitivo*, he suggests a chilled Tio Pepe *fino* sherry. Freixenet's Brut Nature or Codorniu's Anna de Codorniu. For a red, he chooses an "elegant" Pesquera Crianza 1994 from the Ribera del Duero region made from Tempranillo grapes.

His preferred white comes from neighbouring Rueda, a "fresh, dry" Sanz 1996 made from 100 per cent Verdejo. To accompany coffee he goes for Lepanto brandy from Jerez — "non-aggressive and silky".



Jesús Flores: "The strength of Spanish wine is the relation between price and quality"

White towns, black economy: some of the world's finest leather designer-label goods are made in the hills of Andalusia

Hide and chic is the name of the game

Edward Owen *discovers why one does not usually see* the word 'Ubrique' embossed on designer leather goods

EXPORTS

Nestling in a fold of the mountains of Grazalema National Park in central Andalusia lies the whitewashed town of Ubrique, where a semi-clandestine industry provides for the world's discerning rich.

Visitors venturing off the new bypass might notice more than the usual number of shops selling leather goods. But few would *realise that this unassuming town* annually manufactures and mostly exports about £60 million worth of the finest leather bags, luggage and fashion accessories. These are made to order by, and embossed in the name of, the world's top fashion houses.

Ubrique produces a quarter of Spain's leather products and consumes so many top-quality hides that 80 per cent have to be imported. So why the secrecy? And why has the local town hall built a new bullring rather than a centre to promote its fine craft?

The answer lies in the acute rivalry among its manufacturers and the widespread use of unofficial labour. Without doubt, Ubrique is a major statistic in Spain's submerged economy. But it is also becoming respectable.

"We have a population of 18,300 and officially there are only 1,500 working in the industry. But really there are between 5,000 and 6,000 in it — someone in every home," admits Ubrique's mayor, Juan *Ignacio Calvo, a 43-year-old maths* teacher. He is embarrassed that the town's name is often omitted from the designer labels on its fine leather work, but that is the price — for cheap but highly skilled labour — it has to pay. "It's a type of licence from Loewe or Christian Dior or Gucci, which we respect," he says. But he believes it is now time for local designers to promote Ubrique in its own right.

The origins of the centuries-old business came from the livestock that grazed on the rich grass of the mountains — Grazalema has Spain's highest rainfall — and the lack of crags, which can damage hides. The first artisans fashioned the fine leather into *petacas*, tobacco cases and pouches for smugglers and bandits. A folding case made for farmers' livestock documents is arguably the forerunner of the wallet.

Soon the fame of the fine, strong *sewing of Ubrique's leather spread* and demand increased. Until recently the town was infamous for selling copies of designer handbags for a fraction of their actual prices in the Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré or Bond Street. But now the famous fashion houses themselves contract Ubrique's skills. And the wealth obtained from piracy has bought respectability. Well-educated offspring have taken on family factories and invested in state-of-the-art machines.

Victoria Coronil is the young, engaging boss of MCM, which makes bags mainly for Christian Dior. Her grandfather sold his leather goods from a tray at the 1929 World's Fair in nearby Seville. He progressed to exporting crocodile wallets to America, boxes for gambling games and holsters for the military. Her father established contracts with Christian Dior, Dunhill and Paco Rabanne in the early 1980s.

Now MCM's production is divided between Dior and Coronil's own *line*. "Everyone here learns how to work with leather from their childhood," explains Señorita Coronil, who flits between Tokyo, Hong Kong, Paris and Germany. "Our turnover has trebled in the past four years."

As a child, Ana Camargo started making doll clothes from bits of leather left over in her father's factory. Now, as Mardo & Camargo, she sells the softest of leather clothes and chic bags around the world. "We should not just love the prestige of famous fashion houses but should push Ubrique as 'Made in Spain' as well," she enthuses.

An evening stroll in the maze of Ubrique's steep, narrow, cobbled streets, where bougainvillaea, jasmine, geraniums and tomatoes *grow, reveals the real extent of the* industry. Follow the tapping noises and one finds families gathered around tables at home making bits of wallets and handbags on marble slabs. The air is sickly with glue.

In a tiny workshop, Cristóbal, Francisco and Pepe, all in their thirties, expertly fold and glue dyed leather strips to be factory-sewn into wallets. "I can earn £200 pounds a month. We work for different companies," he says, dabbing his fingers into more glue, which he calls, with the lisping Andaluz accent, "thuper".

Antonio León is general secretary of the manufacturers' association representing 300 entities. "The Far East and India will never match our handiwork," he says. "Now *more and more fashion houses*, such as Nina Ricci, are embossing 'Made in Spain', but 56 per cent of our exports are resold from France."

The new bullring? Ubrique is not shy about its other "industry", a bullfighter called Jesulín de Ubrique, who has achieved pop-star status. He can afford to buy a handbag that sells for £1,000 in Paris but can cost a tenth of the price in Ubrique, where it is made.

هكذا من الأصل

EDUCATION

David Blunkett with guide dog Lucy and young carollers from St Matthew's Church of England Primary School in Westminster

Joyful and triumphant

Pupils may grumble but the school carol service is a fine tradition, says Anne Lee

What makes a good school carol service? The end of this, the longest term, is greeted with glee by grey-faced staff — so is one ingredient the palpable feeling of relief from the stalls?

Staff, parents and pupils wait with differing emotions in the silence which precedes the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City*. Is it going to come this year from a *wunderkind* with a recording contract underneath his surplice, or a press-ganged and nervous heavy breather?

If you ask a retired head teacher what they miss most about their school, they are quite likely to say "chapel" or "assembly". If you ask a pupil which is the most tedious part of school life, they will probably volunteer the same answer. The chorister caught reading *Private Eye* during a long service at Wells Cathedral may have lost his livelihood for his sins, but he will have the sympathy of every choirboy in the country.

For choristers too young to appreciate *Private Eye*, the current favourite activity is making models out of Blu-Tack, which sometimes bear a remarkable resemblance to members of staff.

Carol services reveal the hidden agendas in a school more clearly than any other "state occasion". It is possible to discover who's who by scanning the order of service to see who is reading the lesson and when. Do past pupils take part? Are school governors included and do they attend? How many pupils read and take part? How traditional is the service and does the head or the chairman of governors read that final, mystical lesson from John? One of the kindest gestures I have seen was when a member of the administrative staff was asked to read a lesson. Often they are the unsung heroes of a school.

At their best, schools are communities which act like large families. The carol service is their Christmas meal. Some schools go to great trouble to include the wider community. Malvern College invites "the town" to its service; and Queenswood School welcomes handicapped people involved in its community service programme.

The choice of music is telling. Some schools never dare risk the wrath of their establishment by departing from the full nine lessons and carols. Others proceed at a pace and have managed the whole affair within half an hour.

Many music masters seize the opportunity to demonstrate their pupils' prowess to a captive audience, the entire school orchestra arrives and the service becomes more like an annual concert.

One of the most moving events I attended was an international carol service at which music from places as far apart as Africa and Poland marked the climax of a year when many cultures had been celebrated. This appropriately and symbolically marked the end of some international bullying in the sixth form.

Are the prayers real or of the "moving lips" variety? Some carol services are now so multi-faith that they are barely Christian, but they are still about hope and joy and community. They mark a time for forgiveness — and even though pupils moan, they recognise the value of the ceremony.

Margaret Tulloch questions Government priorities

Parent power, or just a Bill full of hot air?

Governments must find parents a mixed blessing. The previous Government often claimed that its education policies were made on behalf of parents, but this wrapping up in the parental banner became less noticeable as it became clear that many parents wanted not only greater accountability and information but smaller classes, roofs repaired and to keep their schools within the Local Education Authority network.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, is rightly proud that 3,500 parents responded to his consultation leaflets in supermarkets last summer. He was heartened that their priorities matched those of the Government: smaller class sizes, rising standards of numeracy and literacy and stronger links between schools and parents.

When his School Standards and Framework Bill was published, he said it would give parents a "stronger role in their children's education". Home-school contracts would define parents' duties and responsibilities and those of the school; parents would have more places on school governing bodies and a greater say on local education committees.

Just before the Bill was published, the Department for Education and Employment hosted a conference to launch an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report on "parents as partners in schooling". This research provides a thorough analysis of parental involvement in nine OECD countries and puts the proposed legislation in context.

The OECD report said: "Governments should not always assume that parents want what they want. A parental agenda needs to be identified by a very broad consultation". The supermarket leaflets did not ask specifically for views on the Government's White Paper proposals. No doubt during the passage of the Bill, which gets its second reading on Monday, a more detailed analysis will emerge of what these 3,500 parents said in their responses.

The OECD also said: "In deciding whether to involve parents more closely, it is important for policy-makers to clarify ... why they want to put a policy in place." The Education Bill shows signs that the Government has not asked itself this. If it has, it has come up with some very cynical reasons.

Many of us interested in the role of parents in education draw a distinction between the need to involve every parent in helping their child to learn, and involving parents in policy-making and governance. The OECD researched both aspects and found successful examples of each.

> 'It seems strange that parents cannot be trusted to do the best for their child without a contract'

If the Bill becomes law, every governing body will be required to ask parents to sign a home-school "agreement" to "cement" the partnership. Thus will a principle be established in schools that responsible participation is only expected if all the participants have signed to say they will be responsible. This is a very dangerous example to put before young people. Governing bodies will be required to "consult" parents about the agreement. Without the class meetings and parent councils in schools which the OECD report found in many countries, how can parents set out their agenda for inclusion in the "agreement"?

The claim that the provision of more parent governors on governing bodies and on LEAs will give parents a greater say also needs closer examination. Unless parent governors have a structure which entitles them to consult parents within the schools and similarly within the LEA, these proposals look like tokenism. Parent governors find it difficult to reach their constituency, many parents do not know their parent governors. Parents tend to identify most with their child's class or tutor group.

However, when it comes to ending selective entry to grammar schools and deciding which of several types the school should be, the Bill requires parents to make the ultimate decision by ballot. It seems strange that parents cannot be trusted to do the best for their child without a contract, but can be trusted to decide about school structures which might affect many generations to come.

The parliamentary process should allow for changes to the Bill to be discussed and agreed. So what can be hoped for? Governing bodies could be required to have a home-school policy without insisting on signed contracts. Similarly, if parent governors were entitled to consult parent councils drawn from termly class meetings, as in Norway, a genuine voice for parents could be established. Both locally and nationally, a structure built on the right of parents to elect parent governors would give parents similar rights to be heard at national level as in many other countries.

Perhaps it all depends on whether the Government *really* wants to hear from parents, or only wants them to make decisions which it would rather avoid.

● The author is executive secretary of the Campaign for State Education.

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Law Report December 19 1997 Queen's Bench Divisional Court

Home Secretary entitled to fix whole life tariff for mandatory lifer

Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Hindley

Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Hooper and Mr Justice Astill

[Judgment December 18]

The Home Secretary, in exercising his broad discretion confirmed by section 29 of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997, was entitled to fix a whole life tariff to be served by a mandatory life sentence prisoner as the period necessary to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence.

Where he had considered that a provisional tariff of 30 years might be appropriate, his successors did not act unlawfully in increasing that period to a whole life tariff where the provisional term had not been fixed or communicated to the prisoner.

However, the policy of the former Home Secretary, which confined review of a whole life tariff to the sole purpose of considering its conversion to a determinate period and only to considerations of retribution and deterrence, was unlawful as constituting a fetter on his discretion.

By contrast the policy of the present Home Secretary, by which other issues such as a prisoner's exceptional progress in custody might be considered, was unobjectionable.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held dismissing an application by Myra Hindley application for judicial review of:

1 The decisions of the Home Secretary communicated on February 3, 1997 that she serve a whole life tariff to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence in respect of the two offences of murder of which she had been convicted, and on November 19, 1997 that the tariff be maintained:

2 The policy of the Home Secretary, Mr Michael Howard, announced on December 7, 1994, that those on whom whole life tariffs had been imposed would not thereafter be able to gain release by reason of their progress in prison and lack of danger to society, and

3 The policy of the Home Secretary, Mr Jack Straw, announced on November 19, 1997, to maintain a category of whole life prisoners in respect of whom their length of time in custody, progress in prison and lack of danger to society would never qualify them for more than the possibility of release before death as an exception to a predetermined general rule of life-long incarceration.

In 1966 the applicant had been convicted of the murder of two children, Lesley Ann Downey and Edward Evans, and of being an accessory after the fact to the murder of a third, John Kilbride. The trial judge indicated to the Home Office that while he hoped her co-defendant, Ian Brady, would not be released in any foreseeable future, she would be kept in prison for "a very long time".

In 1982 Lord Lane, Lord Chief Justice, recommended that while he would never release Brady, and had initially reached the same opinion about the applicant, he would not think any term less than 25 years would be appropriate.

In November 1983 the Home Secretary had outlined his policy on release of mandatory life sentence prisoners, making clear that sexual or sadistic murderers of children could normally expect to serve at least 20 years, and longer where required by the gravity of the offence; he would normally set an initial review three years before expiry of the tariff.

In 1985 Lord Lane confirmed his earlier recommendation and the Home Secretary reached the provisional view that the tariff appropriate for the applicant should be 30 years, while that for Brady should be 40 years.

He announced his policy on life sentence prisoners who had already spent long periods in custody that for those whose tariff was longer than 20 years the first formal review would take place after 17 years in custody.

At that time the Parole Board decided not to review the applicant's case for a further five years, nor Brady's for a further ten years. At that stage the applicant was not told and could not have calculated the provisional 30 year tariff.

In 1987 the applicant confessed to the police her complicity in the murders of two other children, Keith Bennett and Pauline Reade, and in that of John Kilbride. She also gave details of Brady's domination over her and the intimidation to which he had subjected her.

In 1990 the Home Secretary had concluded that careful study of her case in the context of similar cases led inexorably to the imposition of a whole life tariff.

In 1993 the Home Secretary announced his response to *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Doody* ([1994] 1 AC 531) and, in particular that a prisoner would be told his tariff, the judicial recommendations and any reasons for departing from them. He stated that exceptionally a tariff might be increased or reduced but that a prisoner might make representations against any such increase.

On December 7, 1994 the Home Secretary announced his policy in relation to prisoners serving a whole life tariff: that there would be periodic ministerial reviews of such a case after 25 years in custody to consider whether to convert the tariff to a determinate period. Such reviews would be confined solely to considerations of retribution and deterrence.

On December 15 the Home Office informed the applicant of the judicial recommendations, the provisional 30-year tariff set in 1985 and the whole life tariff set in 1990. The applicant made representations on the reduction of her tariff and on February 3, 1997 the Home Secretary set afresh a whole life tariff.

On November 10, 1997 the present Home Secretary made a statement in response to *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Pierson* ([1997] 3 WLR 492) but made it clear that he would continue the practice of his predecessor in setting and reviewing adult murderers' tariffs.

On his discretion to alter a tariff he stated that when reviewing at the 25-year point he would be open to the possibility that exceptional circumstances, including exceptional progress in prison, might render a reduction appropriate.

On November 19, he invited representations from the applicant on the possibility of reduction, but indicated that, applying his policy, he saw no reason to depart from the whole life tariff.

Mr Edward Fitzgerald, QC and Mr Tim Owen for the applicant; Mr David Pannick, QC and Mr Mark Shaw for the Home Secretary.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE rejected Mr Fitzgerald's submission that it was unlawful for a whole life tariff to be set in any case, as being inconsistent with the intentions and expectations of those who had enacted the abolition of the death penalty in 1965, with the practice adopted in the years following abolition and with the parole procedures introduced in 1967.

His Lordship could see no reason in principle why a crime or crimes, if sufficiently heinous, should not be regarded as deserving life-long incarceration for purposes of pure punishment.

One could readily accept that in requiring a sentence of life imprisonment on those convicted of murder, Parliament did not intend the sentence to mean what it said in all, or even a majority, of cases. But there was nothing to suggest that Parliament intended that it should never, even leaving aside considerations of risk, mean what it said.

When, in section 29 of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997, Parliament again conferred a wide discretion on the Home Secretary to release mandatory life sentence prisoners it did so in the knowledge that some such prisoners were subject to whole life tariffs. Successive Lord Chief Justices had regarded such a tariff as lawful, and so did his Lordship.

However, Mr Fitzgerald was on stronger ground in arguing that a whole life tariff with no provision for account to be taken of exceptional circumstances, such as exceptional progress in prison, was unlawful.

A Home Secretary could not bind his successors, so even if he fixed a whole life tariff in a particular case and decided never to look at it again he could not prevent his successors from doing so. But more importantly he could not unlawfully fetter his own discretion.

Section 61 of the Criminal Justice Act 1967, section 35 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 and section 29 of the 1997 Act conferred a very broad discretion on him. He was free to formulate and follow a policy and for administrative reasons it was necessary for him to do so. But he must not adopt a policy which admitted of no exceptions whatever the facts of the case.

Following the House of Lords' approach stated in *In re Findlay* ([1985] AC 318, 336E) his Lordship considered that in his statement of December 7, 1994, Mr Howard had unlawfully fettered his discretion since he expressly said that the purpose of periodical reviews would be solely to consider whether the whole life tariff should be converted to a determinate period and should be confined to considerations of retribution and deterrence.

By that he was to be taken to have meant that no consideration would be given to factors such as exceptional progress in prison. The applicant's challenge to that statement of policy was made good.

However Mr Straw's policy statement of November 10, 1997 remedied that defect and accordingly the policy now in force was legally unobjectionable on that ground.

On the question of the lawfulness of increasing the applicant's tariff his Lordship referred to *Pierson* where Lord Steyn and Lord Hope of Craighead had both held, adversely to the Home Secretary, that since he was exercising what was in all essentials a sentencing function he had acted unlawfully in effectively increasing the prisoner's tariff in that case.

However, Mr Pannick submitted in the present case that both Lord Steyn and Lord Hope had founded their statements of principle on the condition that the tariff had there been fixed and communicated to the prisoner.

His Lordship reviewed their speeches and concluded that it was impossible to regard the conditions of fixing and communicating the tariff to the prisoner as other than fundamental to their conclusion.

That conclusion was in no way surprising. Great importance had been attached to the analogy between a sentencing and a tariff-fixing function, and in the ordinary way a judge passing sentence told the defendant then and there, and as clearly as he could, what the sentence was.

The principle of fairness on which Lord Steyn and Lord Hope had relied found its primary rationale in the need for a sentenced defendant to know once and for all where he stood.

On the question whether the 30-year tariff had been fixed and communicated to the applicant, his Lordship said that the 1985 decision had to considered in context.

At that time the Home Secretary could not have intended or contemplated that his decision would be communicated to the applicant; he had envisaged that a local review committee would consider her case, but probably defer a review for five years.

He had not, as Mr Howard later did, asserted a power to increase a tariff once set and had made it plain that he would not increase a tariff once a first formal review date had been given. He could not have supposed it necessary to reserve a right to reduce a tariff term.

The evidence showed that the provisional fixing of a tariff was an exceptional step. The natural inference was that it was so set at 30 years because the Home Secretary recognised that it might be judged appropriate to imprison the applicant for a longer period.

He reached a provisional conclusion of 30 years because he wished to reserve the right for himself to revise that term, whether upwards or downwards. The tariff was not fixed or set at that time. Nor was it ever communicated to the applicant.

All the official communications and statements now before the court were careful to avoid giving any indication of how long she should expect to remain in prison. In 1989 she wrote to the Home Secretary pleading to be told her tariff date. She was not told.

In the light of *Doody* it was plain that she should have been told of any decision on her tariff term, of any departure from the judicial recommendations and the reasons for it.

It was hard on her that she should be prejudiced by the Home Secretary's failure to do what the law now said he should have done. But it was difficult to see how the applicant could be in a better position than the two mandatory life sentence prisoners considered in *Findlay* (at p338) who had been grossly disadvantaged by a change of policy and whose challenge to its implementation had failed.

In their speeches in *Pierson*, Lord Browne-Wilkinson and Lord Lloyd of Berwick were wholly supportive of the Home Secretary's argument here that it was within his wide discretion conferred by statute to increase the tariff.

His Lordship considered that Lord Goff of Chieveley in his speech had accepted the right of the Home Secretary to increase a tariff previously set in accordance with a policy duly adopted and formerly announced, subject to any argument founded on legitimate expectation.

If that were so, it would appear that the majority accepted the lawfulness of such a power in principle. But in any event that principle would not apply to a case such as the present where the 30-year tariff had not been fixed and communicated to the applicant.

That approach to the Home Secretary's role in relation to mandatory life sentence prisoners was wholly consistent with the analysis in *Findlay* and *Doody*.

His Lordship rejected further challenges to the lawfulness of the 1990 and 1997 decisions on the grounds of failure to make disclosure and to invite representations as required by *Doody*, irrationality, defeat of the applicant's legitimate expectation and want of reasons.

However, he parted from the case uneasily conscious that the issues which might really underlie it were not before the court.

There was room for serious debate whether the task of determining how long convicted murderers should serve in prison as punishment for their crimes should be undertaken by the judiciary, as in the case of discretionary life prisoners, or, as now, by the executive.

That was in large measure a political and constitutional debate: not a question for decision by the court.

The applicant clearly felt that she was held hostage to public opinion, condemned to pass the rest of her life in prison, although no longer judged a danger to anyone, because of her notoriety and the public obloquy which would fall on any Home Secretary who ordered her release.

But, no doubt wisely, she made no accusation of bad faith or that the Home Secretary had exercised his discretion for any improper or ulterior purpose or had taken into account any irrelevant or improper consideration.

Had such a charge been made the court would have had to consider it and any evidence in rebuttal and also the extent to which, if at all, the Home Secretary might properly take account of public opinion.

But that challenge had not been made and the court had to confine its decision to the grounds argued before it.

Mr Justice Hooper agreed with both judgments and Mr Justice Astill delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Taylor Nichol, Finsbury Park; Treasury Solicitor.

Past sentences for firearms offences sometimes failed to reflect public concern

Regina v Avis and related appeals and applications

Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Douglas Brown and Mr Justice Kay

[Judgment December 16]

Given the clear public need to discourage unlawful possession and use of firearms, both real and imitation, and Parliament's intention expressed by the continuing increase in maximum penalties, the courts should treat such offences under the Firearms Act 1968, as amended by the Firearms (Amendment) Act 1994, as serious. Past sentences for such offences had sometimes failed to reflect their seriousness and the justifiable public concern they aroused.

Save for minor infringements, offences committed under sections 1(1), 2(1), 3, 4, 5(1A), 16, 16A, 17(1) and (2), 18(1), 19 and 21(4), would generally merit custodial sentences, even on a plea of guilty and where the offender had no pevious record. On breaches of sections 4, 5, 16, 16A, 17(1) and (2), 18(1), 19 or 21, the custodial term was likely to be considerable, and where particular factors were present, terms at or approaching the maximum might be appropriate.

The Court of Appeal so stated when determining appeals against sentence by Tony Avis, Richard Barton and Gerald Thomas and refusing applications for leave to appeal against sentence by Richard Torrington, Shaun Marquez and Harold Goldsmith.

Mr Roderick Price, Mr Richard Thatcher, Mr John Lloyd-Thomas, Mr Kevin Clarke, Ms Serena Tierney, solicitor, Mr David Bradshaw, respectively, for the appellants and applicants, all assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals; Mr Nicholas Hilliard as amicus curiae.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, giving the judgment of the court, said that review of the level of sentence for firearm offences had been prompted by considerations that:

1 In recent cases, the Court of Appeal had criticised sentences imposed or upheld in previous cases as inadequately reflecting the gravity of such offences: see *R v Ecclestone* ([1995] 16 Cr App R (S) 9, 11); *R v Francis* ([1995] 16 Cr App R (S) 95, 98) and *R v Clarke* ([1997] 1 Cr App R (S) 323, 324).

2 Parliament, in the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, had recently increased the maximum term that might be imposed for certain of the offences.

3 Criminal statistics for England and Wales, published by the Home Office for 1996 had shown a sharp increase from 1991 to 1996 in the number of convictions for certain, but not all, firearm offences; that accorded with the subjective impression of a number of judges that cases involving firearms came before them much more frequently than was once the case, especially in some parts of the country.

The unlawful possession and use of firearms was generally regarded as a grave source of danger to society: firearms might be used to take life or cause serious injury and to further the commission of other serious crimes.

Often the victims would be those charged with the enforcement of the law or the protection of persons or property. In the conflicts which occurred between competing criminal gangs, often related to the supply of drugs, the use and possession of firearms provoked an escalating spiral of violence.

Where imitation firearms were involved the risk to life and limb was absent but such weapons could be and often were used to frighten victims in order to reinforce unlawful demands. Such weapons were difficult to distinguish from the real thing, and the victim was usually as much frightened as if a genuine firearm had been used.

The appropriate level of sentence would, as for any other offence, depend on all the particular facts relevant to the offence and the offender and it would be wrong for the Court of Appeal to seek to prescribe unduly restrictive sentencing guidelines.

However it would usually be appropriate for the sentencing court to ask itself four questions:

1 What sort of weapon was involved? Genuine weapons were more dangerous than imitation firearms, loaded firearms than unloaded, unloaded for which ammunition was available than where none was available. Possession of a firearm which had no lawful use, such as a sawn-off shotgun, would be viewed even more seriously than possession of a firearm capable of lawful use.

2 What, if any, use had been made of the firearm? The court had to take account of all the circumstances surrounding any use made of the firearm: the more prolonged and premeditated and violent the use the more serious the offence was likely to be.

3 With what intention, if any, did the defendant possess or use the firearm? Generally the most serious offences under the Act were those requiring proof of a specific criminal intent: to endanger life, cause fear of violence, resist arrest, commit an indictable offence. The more serious the act intended, the more serious the offence.

4 What was the defendant's record? The seriousness of any firearm offence was inevitably increased if the offender had an established record of committing firearms offences or crimes of violence.

The court referred to the 1968 Act which laid down a hierarchy of offences, and mentioned:

1 Section 1(1) by which it was an offence to possess, purchase or acquire a firearm or ammunition without a certificate: the maximum penalty had been raised by the 1994 Act from three to five years.

2 Section 2(1) whereby possession, purchase or acquisition of a shotgun without a certificate carried a maximum raised by the 1994 Act from three to five years.

3 Section 21(4): the offence of possessing a firearm or ammunition as a prohibited person for which the maximum had been raised by the 1994 Act from three to five years.

4 Section 3: the offence of trading in firearms without being an authorised dealer and of selling firearms to a person without a certificate for which the maximum had been raised from three to five years.

5 Section 4 by which it was an offence to shorten the barrel of a shotgun, to convert certain items into a firearm and to commit an offence under section 1(1) in the aggravated form set out in section 4(4) by possessing, purchasing or acquiring a shortened shotgun or converted firearm: the maximum term had been increased by the 1994 Act from five to seven years.

6 Section 19: whereby the offence of possessing a firearm and ammunition in any public place attracted a maximum of seven years, increased from five by the 1994 Act.

7 Section 5(1) and (1A), as inserted by the Firearms Act (Amendment) Regulations (SI 1992 No 2823), by which it was an offence to possess or distribute certain prohibited weapons or ammunition and where the maximum in the first subsection had been raised from five to 10 years and in the second subsection from two to 10 years by the 1994 Act.

8 Section 16A, inserted into the 1968 Act by the Firearms (Amendment) Act 1994, by which it was an offence to possess any firearm or imitation with intent to cause or enable another to cause any person to believe that unlawful violence would be used against him or another; for that offence a maximum of 10 years was provided.

9 Section 16 by which it was an offence for a person to have in his possession any firearm or ammunition with intent to endanger life or enable another to do so whether or not any injury were caused and where the maximum had been raised by the Criminal Justice Act 1972 from 14 years to life.

10 Section 17(1) by which to make use or attempt to make use of a firearm or imitation with intent to resist or prevent arrest was an offence for the which the maximum had been raised by the 1972 Act from 14 years to life.

11 Section 17(2) whereby it was an offence, at the time of committing other specified offences, to possess a firearm or imitation, unless, it was shown that possession was for a lawful object and where the maximum had been raised first by the 1972 Act from seven to 14 years and then by the Criminal Justice Act 1988 to life.

12 Section 18(1) by which it was an offence for a person to have with him a firearm or imitation with intent to commit an indictable offence or to resist arrest or prevent the arrest of another and for which the maximum had been first raised by the 1972 Act from 10 to 14 years and then by the 1988 Act to life.

The authorities relating to offences under those sections, to which the court referred, illustrated the factual and personal diversity of the cases coming before the courts. Any rigid formulaic approach to levels of sentence would be productive of injustice in some cases.

However, given the clear public need to discourage the unlawful possession and use of firearms, both real and imitation, and the intention of Parliament expressed in a continuing increase in maximum penalties, the courts should treat any offence against the provisions to which the court had referred as serious.

Some of the sentences imposed for those offences had in the past failed to reflect their seriousness and the justifiable public concern which they aroused.

Save for minor infringements which might be and were properly dealt with summarily, offences against those provisions would almost invariably merit terms of custody, even on a plea of guilty and where an offender had no previous record.

Where there were breaches of sections 4, 5, 16, 16A, 17(1) and (2), 18(1), 19 or 21, the custodial term was likely to be of considerable length and where the four questions suggested by the court yielded answers adverse to the offender, terms at or approaching the maximum might in a contested case be appropriate.

An indeterminate sentence should however be imposed only where the established criteria for imposing such a sentence were met.

The court then considered and dealt with the individual appeals and applications.

Solicitors: Treasury Solicitor.

Inquiries most sensitive

Regina v Smith (David James)

Defence inquiries about alleged police informants were notoriously sensitive and if there was to be such an inquiry it should be made in the most specific terms so that no misunderstanding could arise.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Rose, Mr Justice Holland and Judge Clarke, QC) so stated on November 17, when dismissing the appeal of David James Smith against his conviction on April 14, 1997 at York Crown Court (Judge Crabtree and a jury) of handling stolen goods.

MR JUSTICE HOLLAND said that at the beginning of the trial counsel for the appellant asked prosecuting counsel whether a co-accused was a police informant. Prosecuting counsel misunderstood, thinking that the inquiry related to the identity of an anonymous informant who had caused the police to go to the appellant's address.

After making unsuccessful inquiries himself, prosecuting counsel made an ex parte application to the judge in chambers for an adjournment. That was refused.

Plainly it was a matter of criticism that in such a sensitive area there was a misunderstanding between counsel. Further, counsel was in error in going alone to the judge in chambers when there was no basis for an ex parte application and without a shorthand writer being present to record what was said in the absence of defence counsel. Finally, their Lordships were not happy about the judge's apparent view that the information sought would have been of no value.

Their Lordships condemned forthrightly what had happened. However, in the circumstances they were satisfied that the conviction was safe.

Northern Ireland Law Report December 19 1997

Right to collect from foreshore

Adair v National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty and Another

Before Mr Justice Girvan

[Judgment November 21]

At common law, members of the public were entitled to collect shellfish from tidal waters and the foreshore as an incident of the public right to fish but were entitled to take lugworms only as an ancillary to the right to fish.

Mr Justice Girvan, sitting in the Chancery Division of the High Court of Northern Ireland, so held in granting declaratory relief to the plaintiff, Thomas Adair, that he was entitled to collect winkles and whelks from the waters and bed of Strangford Lough below the water mark and from that part of the foreshore owned by the first defendant, the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty.

The second defendant, the Crown Estate Commissioners, which disputed entitlement to part of the foreshore with the National Trust took no part in the proceedings.

Mr E. J. David McBrien for the plaintiff; Mr A. F. W. Devlin for the National Trust.

MR JUSTICE GIRVAN said that for the purposes of the law the term "foreshore" had a precise meaning and referred to that portion of the realm which lay between the high water mark and low water mark of ordinary tides occurring between the spring and neap tides and which was alternately covered and left dry by the flux and reflux of the tide.

Strangford Lough was an arm of the sea. Because of its physical characteristics at low tide extensive areas of foreshore were left exposed and formed the habitat for a large number of different species of marine life including shellfish, birds and vegetation.

Increasing awareness of environmental issues had highlighted the need for the protection of marine life in coastal areas and in particular Strangford Lough which was an area of outstanding scientific interest and natural beauty. The National Trust was very properly concerned to protect such areas placed in its charge.

The plaintiff for most of his life had been actively involved in the local fish industry and he continued to collect shellfish from both the foreshore and from the sea in the area claimed by the National Trust. The National Trust asserted that he had no entitlement so to do.

At common law there was a public right to take fish from the tidal waters around the Kingdom. The common law right extended to the tidal reaches of all rivers and estuaries and in the sea and arms of the sea within the territorial limits of the Kingdom.

It had never been questioned in the past that the right to take fish in tidal waters included the right to take shellfish: see *Truro Corporation v Rowe* ([1902] 2 KB 709).

His Lordship was satisfied that the plaintiff's common law right extended to shellfish such as whelks.

The rights of persons over the foreshore raised more difficult questions. By parity of reasoning Mr Devlin contended that there was no logical reason why a public right to fish in tidal waters implied a similar right to collect shellfish on the foreshore when the tide was out.

The common law, however, had not always developed on the basis of logic and the common law, in particular in the context of determining the rights of the public on the foreshore, had developed piecemeal and not as a reasoned whole.

The commonly held view had long been that the public right to fish in the sea extended to the collection of fish including shellfish on the exposed foreshore when the tide was out: see *Baggott v Orr* ([1801] 2 B & D 472).

His Lordship concluded that there was a common law right vested in the members of the public to take shellfish from the foreshore and that that was an incident of the public right to fish. While there were already fine distinctions and examples of illogicality in relation to the law of the foreshore, any other conclusion in the context of the collecting of shellfish would give rise to strange consequences.

If no such right existed, a member of the public could collect shellfish from the sea as it receded provided that he lifted them from beneath the surface of the water but he could not collect shellfish once that water had receded from a particular area. He could collect shellfish from the bottom of a rock partially covered by the sea but not from the part of the rock above the level of the water. He could collect shellfish from rock pools but not after they had dried out.

Lugworms were not fish and right to dig for such worms, if it existed, had to arise on some other basis. In *Anderson v Alnwick District Council* ([1993] 1 WLR 1156) the Court of Appeal held that a public right to take worms from the foreshore was recognised by common law as ancillary to the right to fish provided that the taking of worms was directly related to an actual or intended exercise of that right.

It followed that the plaintiff could not assert a claim to an unrestricted and unfettered right to take lugworms for any purpose and in any quantity. On his own evidence he was collecting lugworms commercially with a view to selling them to third parties and not as an incident of his own personal fishing purposes.

The public right to fish in sea waters and on the foreshore was a common law development of some antiquity and emerged in an age that failed to recognise the environmental and ecological impact that flowed from an untrammelled right to reap the harvests of nature.

It paid no regard to the threat of the depletion of fish stocks or to the impact such a depletion would have on the natural chain.

The common law right, however, was so entrenched in the law that it was now a matter for the legislature rather than the courts to regulate the common law right.

Solicitors: Campbell Bates & Co, Comber; Johns Elliot, Belfast.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES 0171-782 7344

PUBLIC NOTICES

CHARITY COMMISSION
Charity: Barnardo's Heritage Centre
Scheme for alteration of the Charity's trust deed
Reference: AJB/76432/CD/(Ldn)
The Commissioners propose the make a Scheme for this charity. A copy of the draft Scheme can be seen at Barnardo's, Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6 1QG or can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to The Charity Commission, St Alban's House, 57/60 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4QX quoting the above reference. Comments or representations can be made within one month from today.

BANCO INVERLAT SA STAFF BENEFITS PLAN
(Formerly known as Multibanco Comermex SA Staff Benefits Plan)
Notice to all creditors and others to make their claims against the Trustees.
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Section 27 of the Trustee Act 1925, that any person having any interest in or claim against the Banco Inverlat SA Staff Benefits Plan is hereby required to send particulars of his or her claim in writing, to the Trustees of the Plan at Glastage Ltd, Finsbury House, 23 Finsbury Circus, London EC2M 7AL, and to send such particulars not later than two months after the date of this Notice, after which date the Trustees will distribute the fund among the persons of whom they then have notice and will not, as regards the property so distributed, be liable to any person of whose claim they shall not then have notice.

ALDERMAN, GERALD WILLIAM ALDERMAN late of Surbiton, Surrey died there on 11 November 1997 (Estate about £150,000)
BROWN, EDWARD HENRY RALPH BROWN otherwise EDWARD BROWN late of Acton, London W3 died there on 14 September 1997 (Estate about £40,000)
CLARK, JACK RICHARD CLARK late of Manor Park, London E12 died there on 29 March 1996 (Estate about £17,000)
DIXON nee ROOKE, VIOLET DIXON nee ROOKE WIDOW late of Cleator Moor, Cumbria died at Whitehaven, Cumbria on 4 March 1997 (Estate about £11,000)
EAVES, DORIS KATHLEEN EAVES SPINSTER late of Bournemouth, Dorset died there on 10 September 1996 (Estate about £5,400)
FITZPATRICK, JOHN FITZPATRICK late of Nottingham died there on 1 November 1997 (Estate about £100,000)
HUGHES, RAYMOND CHARLES HUGHES late of Manchester died at Sale, Cheshire on 15 March 1997 (Estate about £8,600)
LAWRENCE nee STENNING, ROSIE LAWRENCE nee STENNING WIDOW late of West Norwood, London SE27 died at East Dulwich, London SE22 on 9 January 1996 (Estate about £5,000)
LLOYD, LLEWELLYN LLOYD late of Shoeburyness, Essex died at Southend on Sea on 22 May 1997 (Estate about £5,500)

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL gives notice that the following discussions with all parties responding to OJEC Notice 97/S 125-78099/EN and in compliance with the negotiated procurement procedure, it has selected ICL CFM as preferred supplier for the provision of relevant IS/IT services. The parties will now negotiate the final terms of the relevant Agreement.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PROVISION OF INSURANCE SERVICES
Tenders are to be invited for the following categories of insurance cover which are due for renewal on 1st April
Motor
Engineering (inspection only).
Applicants wishing to be considered for inclusion on the select list of tenderers must be authorised to write this business in the United Kingdom. Applicants should also provide list of similar service provisions in the past 3 years, last 3 years annual accounts and description of service providers facilities for ensuring the quality of service. The contract for each category will be for minimum of one year with possible options to extend to a maximum of five years. The contracts will be awarded on the basis of the economically most advantageous tender in terms of quality of service, price and efficiency. The final date for receipt of expressions of interest is 2nd January 1998. A specification will be issued to selected applicants mid January 1998. Applications should be in writing to
Chief Executive,
Hampshire County Council,
The Castle, Winchester, Hants SO23 8UJ. Ref: CL/NS/JR.

MULLIGAN, JOHN FRANCIS MULLIGAN late of Chesterfield, Derbyshire died there on 17 August 1997 (Estate about £15,000)
PLUMB nee HALE, WINIFRED ALICE PLUMB nee HALE WIDOW late of Dawlish, Devon died there on 14 December 1996 (Estate about £60,000)
SAMMAS, ARBELLA SAMMAS SPINSTER late of West Hampstead, London NW6 died there on 18 June 1992 (Estate about £14,000)
SMITH, ELSIE SMITH SPINSTER late of Fulham, London SW6 died there on 19 June 1997 (Estate about £8,000)
TURNER, CLIFFORD TURNER late of Chelsea, London SW3 died there on 6 January 1997 (Estate about £11,000)
WALSH, JAMES WALSH otherwise JAMES PATRICK WALSH late of Northampton, Northamptonshire died there on 20 May 1996 (Estate about £5,220)
WHEAL nee DAWKIN, EDITH MABEL WHEAL nee DAWKIN late of Ilford, Essex died at Goodmayes, Essex on 31 March 1994 (Estate about £8,000)
WILLIAMS, ALBERT JOHN WILLIAMS, late of Southend on Sea, Essex died at Westcliffe on Sea, Essex on 22 November 1996 (Estate about £10,000)
The kin of the above-named are requested to apply to the Treasury Solicitor (BV), Queen Anne's Chambers, 28 Broadway, London SW1H 9JS, failing which the Treasury Solicitor may take steps to administer the estate.

HARROGATE BOROUGH COUNCIL invites interested firms of Solicitors to tender for the Council's legal work in connection with the redevelopment scheme for the Royal Baths in Harrogate.
A copy of the Brief and full tendering instructions are available on application by letter or fax from:-
The Solicitor to the Council
Council Offices
Crescent Gardens
Harrogate HG1 2SG
Fax: 01423 530706

LEGAL NOTICES

No 30425
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION
BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT REGISTRY
IN THE MATTER OF CLEARING INTERNATIONAL LIMITED
AND
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Order of the High Court of Justice, (Chancery Division, Birmingham District Registry), dated 24th November 1997 confirming the reduction of the share capital of the Company resolved on and effected by a special resolution passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Company held on 7th October 1997 was registered by the Registrar of Companies on 11th December 1997.
DATED this 17th day of December 1997
Eversheds
10 Newhall Street
Birmingham B3 3LX
Solicitors for the above-named Company
Ref: EIS/IKT
Tel: 0121 233 2001

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
No. 005570 of 1997
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT
IN THE MATTER OF PROVEND SERVICES LIMITED
AND
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Petition was on 28th November 1997 presented to Her Majesty's High Court of Justice for the confirmation of the cancellation of the above named Company's share premium account.
AND NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Registrar of the Companies Court at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL on 21st day of January 1998.
ANY Creditor or Shareholder of the said Company desiring to oppose the making of an Order for the confirmation of the said cancellation of share premium account should appear at the time of hearing in person or by Counsel for that purpose.
A copy of the said Petition will be furnished to any such person requiring the same by the undermentioned Solicitors on payment of the regulated charge for the same.
Dated 12 December 1997
S J Berwin & Co
222 Grays Inn Road
London WC1X 8HB
Solicitors for the above-named Company
Ref: 423/F5077.21

The Insolvency Act 1986
YAOHAN U.K. LIMITED
AND
YAOHAN DEVELOPMENT U.K. LIMITED
(Both in Creditors Voluntary Liquidation)
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Malcolm B Harris & Peter Anderson of Harris Kafton, First Floor, 7 Harley Street, London W1N 1DA were appointed Joint Liquidators of the above Companies on 16th December 1997.
NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that the Creditors of the above named Companies are required on or before the 30th January 1998 to send in their names and addresses, particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their Solicitors (if any) to Malcolm B Harris & Peter Anderson of Harris Kafton, First Floor, 7 Harley Street, London W1N 1DA the Joint Liquidators of the said Companies and if so required by notice in writing from the said Joint Liquidators, are personally or by their Solicitors, to come in and prove their said debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notices, or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts are proved.
Dated this 17th December 1997
Malcolm B Harris and P Anderson
Joint Liquidators

CREDITORS' VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION
FARICK LIMITED (IN LIQUIDATION)
COMPANY NUMBER: 2147040
Notice is given that the final meeting of the creditors of the company will be held at No 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9QL on Wednesday 21 January 1998 at 11.00 am to be followed at 11.15 am by the final meeting of shareholders.
The purpose of the meetings, which are called under the provisions of Section 106 of the Insolvency Act 1986, is to receive a statement showing the outcome of the liquidation and an explanation of it.
The liquidators give notice as required by Rules 34.186 and 11.7 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that there will be no further dividend paid to the creditors of the company and that the funds realised have been distributed to the members or used to defray the expenses of the liquidation.
Alan John Barrett, Liquidator
Date: 15th December 1997

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF JOINT LIQUIDATORS AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS TO CLAIM
CRAFTAPPLY LIMITED (IN LIQUIDATION)
Principal Trading Address:
77 St John Street,
London, EC1M 4AW
Company Number: 02896933
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Rule 4.106 of The Insolvency Rules 1986 that on 8 December 1997 James Robert Drummond Smith and Christopher Morris were appointed Joint liquidators of the above named company (compulsory liquidation).
Creditors of the company who have not already done so should submit their claims in writing to me at the following address under reference: PBS/TSB/KDD
James Robert Drummond Smith
Deloitte & Touche
Stonecutter Court
1 Stonecutter Street
London EC4A 4TR

PENTAGON LIMITED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to the Companies Act 1985 Section 175 that a special resolution was passed by the written resolution of all the relevant members of the above named company ("the Company") dated 16th December 1997:
1. approving a form of contract providing for the purchase by the Company of 250,000 of its 'AA' Ordinary Shares of £1 each and 1,250,000 of its 'AA' Redeemable Preference Shares of £1 each for the aggregate sum of £1,500,000; and
2. authorising the payment of £299,000 of the said sum out of capital.
The statutory declaration of the directors of the Company and the auditors' report required by the Companies Act 1985 Section 173(5) are available for inspection at the registered office of the Company at 14 Southernhay West, Exeter, Devon. Any creditor of the Company may at any time within the 5 weeks immediately following 16th December 1997 apply to the court under the Companies Act 1985 Section 176 for an order cancelling the resolution or for other relief.
DATED this 17th December 1997
CROSSE & CROSSE
14 Southernhay West
Exeter
Devon EX1 1PL
Solicitor for the Company

CREDITORS' VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION
BELLINO FASHIONS LIMITED (IN LIQUIDATION)
COMPANY NUMBER: 0938148
Notice is given that the final meeting of the creditors of the company will be held at No 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9QL on Wednesday 21 January 1998 at 10.00 am to be followed at 10.15 am by the final meeting of shareholders.
The purpose of the meetings, which are called under the provisions of Section 106 of the Insolvency Act 1986, is to receive a statement showing the outcome of the liquidation and an explanation of it.
The liquidators give notice as required by Rules 34.186 and 11.7 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that there will be no further dividend paid to the creditors of the company and that the funds realised have been distributed to the members or used to defray the expenses of the liquidation.
Alan John Barrett, Liquidator
Date: 15th December 1997

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES
TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE
0171 680 6878
OR
FAX: 0171 481 9313
Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

هكذا من الأجل

The Times

'Eighty people came in one by one to be told they had to go. Imagine the agony for a young editor'

After a controversial start and reports of low staff morale, Richard Addis, Editor of *The Express*, is still hopeful of a change in his paper's fortunes. Interview by **Michael Leapman**

ALAN WELLER

Richard Addis is rumoured to have kept staff who were shrewd enough to claim they venerated St Paul, his favourite saint

Richard Addis has filled the Editor's chair at *The Express* for just over two years, but still finds it uncomfortable. "I've never liked this MFI leather-covered furniture," he confides to me. And when Stephen Grabiner, the laddish chief executive of United Newspapers, arrives to join us, Addis teases him with a plea for an office makeover.

Grabiner hedges: "After a year of year-on-year sales increases you can have your new furniture."

"So that will be in six months," is Addis's triumphal retort. He swivels on the despised chair to face me. "Make a note," he commands.

Addis is right to underline that sales of the mid-market tabloid, now called simply *The Express* after the effective merger of the daily and Sunday editions, have been on a gently rising curve since the middle of the year, compared with the same period in 1996. The advance is insignificant, however, compared with the sharper gains made by its chief rival, the *Daily Mail*. And despite Addis's editorial innovations, the gap between the two papers continues to widen.

But he believes that changes in the nation's social and political climate may at last be working in favour of the new paper he is creating from a title that, before he arrived in December 1995, had been in retreat for decades.

Turn the clock back 30 years. In 1967 the *Daily Express*, just beginning its long post-Beaverbrook decline, sold just under four million copies a day — nearly half a million down from its crusading peak in the late Fifties. The *Daily Mail* was at just more than two million. Both were struggling against the all-powerful *Daily Mirror*, selling more than five million comfortably.

Ten years later, all three had been damaged by Rupert Murdoch's revitalised *Sun*, then about to overtake the *Daily Mirror* at 3.7 million. *The Express* was down to 2.5 million and the *Daily Mail* 1.8 million. By 1987 the *Daily Mail*, still at 1.8 million, was on the brink of overhauling the demoralised *Daily Express*. Today the *Daily Mail*, with 2.23 million, is 7 per cent up on last year while *The Express*, on 1.21 million, has improved its circulation by less than 1 per cent — still slightly below what it was when Addis took over.

Despite that, company audits show the paper has remained profitable and Addis, the former executive editor of the *Daily Mail*, believes he is achieving a significant turnaround at last.

"We set about things with great gusto, like you would in a badly ruined garden — hacking and slashing and cutting things down," he recalls of his first few weeks as Editor. "Within weeks we were producing an *Express* that was quite different."

The changes began in January 1996. Nearly every day the paper carried an announcement of some startling development. Harking back to *The Express*'s famous history, Addis restored Beachcomber, the whimsical columnist created by J.B. Morton in the Thirties, and reintroduced the pseudonymous William Hickey gossip column, dropped in the Eighties.

New, upmarket columnists — Mary Kenny, Anthony Holden, Alexander Chancellor — were engaged. Roy Hattersley was hired as a television critic. With some fanfare, the letters page was brought from the back of the paper to somewhere near the front and letters were solicited from celebrities such as Terry Wogan, John Humphrys, Jimmy Hill and the Duchess of Kent. A page of answers to mundane queries was launched, aping the *Daily Mail*.

Some of these innovations have survived, but the letters page soon returned to the back of the paper, taking Beachcomber with it. Chancellor and Hattersley have moved on. "It was all quite a healthy

the media interview

process," Addis insists. "I would defend it as a way of indicating change — making dramatic moves when you arrive, then settling down. I thought *The Express* desperately needed a heart."

But the response of readers was negative. Circulation continued to sink. Then in August 1996 came the merger of United Newspapers, owners of *The Express* titles, and Lord Hollick's television-led conglomerate MAI. Grabiner was hired from *The Daily Telegraph* to run the newspaper side of the merged company, United News and Media.

The new management team found Addis depressed by his lack of initial success. "When I first met Stephen and Lord Hollick, I told them I wasn't sure whether I could do anything with the paper," he recalls. "I was philosophically accepting that maybe we were at the end of the road."

Lord Hollick and Grabiner disagreed. They began by imposing tight cost controls, which led to the merger of the daily and Sunday papers, with a reduced staff under a single editor. This meant that either Addis or Sue Douglas, the Editor of *The Sunday Express*, would have to fall on their sword, and they both knew it. It was a tense time.

"I wasn't sure that it wouldn't be me who would have to go," he recollects. "But Sue and I actually managed, rather miraculously, not to fall out over it."

In the event Douglas, who had been appointed at the same time as Addis, was the reluctant loser. Most of her senior staff went with her, along with many other long-term employees thought to be surplus to the requirements of the streamlined seven-day paper.

Senior staff say that Addis got the job over Douglas because he did everything the management demanded and never once defended the editorial department from the cost-cutters.

Although he had fired a few people in the initial pruning, this was the first time that Addis, then 40, had been involved in such a wholesale slaughter. He says it sickened him. He is a mild-mannered man who, as a youth, had thought of becoming a monk. It all went against the grain.

"Eighty people came in one by one and were told they had to go. It was a horrible atmosphere. People queued outside, knowing what they were going to be told. Imagine the agony of that for a new young editor," he says.

But imagine, too, the even greater agony of the victims, some of whom had spent the best part of a lifetime with the paper. There are still complaints about the brutality of the cull, in particular about Addis's failure to break the news in person to all the people who had to go. Because there were so many, he saw only about half, leaving senior executives to deal with the others.

Former staff say it is a nonsense to suggest that he knew "the agony" of the sackings because he typically left it to others to do the dirty work. Apocryphal stories circulated that those fortunate enough to be summoned to his office often kept their jobs if they were shrewd enough to weep or to claim affection and veneration for St Paul, Addis's favourite saint.

His approach was reportedly crass, telephoning the long-serving New York correspondent and inquiring: "How would you like a rather large cheque?"

"It was horrible but I could see it was necessary," says the man who is also reported to have likened sacking staff to clearing out an old sock drawer. Critics also claim that when his deputy, Ian Monk, faced dismissal for suspected corrupt practice, Addis defended him until told by Lord Hollick that both would then have to go. Monk left that night.

"I'm glad to say the atmosphere now is much happier, with the office decked out with Christmas cards and all the departments having their parties," says Addis.

Survivors, however, find ironic his instructions that "staff must misbehave or be sacked" at his Christmas party (prosaically called the "St Lazarus Day Party") this week, since this was the first *Express* Editor to frown on the practice of lunch. Staff were instructed that if lunch was required to get a story, then "forget the story".

Even if not all staff feel like joining in, Addis's new party mood reflects an easing of the financial stringency: "We have got the costs right down, reinvested £10 million — mainly in the new Saturday magazine — and we have another £10 million next year for huge projects that will improve the paper a lot. Clive Hollick is very enthusiastic about newspapers. When he arrived we weren't sure that he would be." Lord Hollick is also known to be enthusiastic about new Labour and Addis wondered at first whether this would cause friction, given *The Express*'s traditional conservatism.

"If you were him, wouldn't you have told me that I had to endorse Blair in the election? I was expecting him to say that — he was so much part of the Blair project and passionately wanted the victory."

In the event Lord Hollick gave no such instruction (although there were some notably pro-Blair news stories) and *The Express* half-heartedly advised its readers to vote Conservative. Since the election the paper has grown increasingly supportive of the Government: last week its main feature concluded that Mr Blair was a greater radical reformer than Baroness Thatcher.

"Ten years ago our readers would have quivered with rage at that," Addis concedes. "But we did some research. We found that in May half our readers voted Tory and half Labour. A month later we did a survey and 90 per cent of those who voted Tory said they were quite happy with the Labour Government.

"We think we have found a new middle class which has emerged as an important force in the past ten years and which does vote Labour. It has different obsessions from the Thatcherite middle class that David English built the *Mail* on so brilliantly."

Thus the new *Express* focuses sharply on the family and health. Its first drugs correspondent, who will write on the use and abuse of recreational drugs such as cannabis and Ecstasy, has just been appointed. Another current national obsession is sport, and Addis believes he has caught that mood, too, by running a separate sports section in the middle of the paper every day. Surveys show that this is popular with readers.

Grabiner, who helped to develop the sports section, holds it out as an example of co-operation between the editorial and the commercial sides of the paper. "We realised sport was an area it was impossible to write too much about, so we've invested heavily in it across all seven days. We are now giving Richard and his colleagues the money they need to develop the whole paper. We're putting money into increased pagination, marketing and better-quality magazines.

"We are taking a newspaper that has had at least ten years of being in the hands of people who didn't love it, didn't care for it and didn't invest in it. We are starting to love and care for it. But it takes a very long time to reverse a decline, especially one that has been going on for so long."

Neither man expects an imminent dramatic improvement, but they are encouraged by evidence that some readers of the "red top" tabloids — *The Sun* and *The Express*'s sister paper, the *Daily Star* — are switching to the middle market.

There have been many predictions of his imminent departure, but so far Addis, famous for maintaining public insouciance in the face of adversity, has stayed firmly put.

The discreet commercial charm of ITV

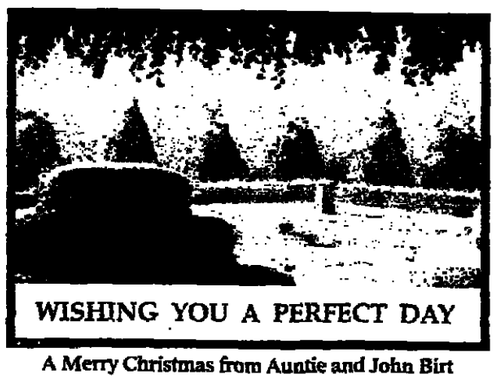
■ WILL the sound of a mobile phone ringing away inside its Christmas box make you smile or scream? Will an absent father faxing over the wrapping paper to his distant son melt your heart? As commercialism bites ever deeper into ITV's festive programming, viewers' reactions to these images will be watched closely. For the first time all of ITV's seasonal specials, starting with Jack Dee's on Sunday, are being sponsored, by Panasonic. But will this increased, repetitive clutter lead people to zap to another channel? The growth in credits, which began so innocently with Powergen's umbrellas on weather reports, is starting to annoy. The recent Doritos credits attached to ITV Movies — in which dead famous faces make crunching noises — produced a hundred complaints to the Independent Television Commission, which says "it certainly hit a nerve".

The problem is that under sponsorship rules, companies cannot show their products directly. So Panasonic's £500,000 for its 15-second slots has to focus on suggestive noises: the phone's ring and the fax machine's singing electronic notes. These, of course, are the very things people want to escape from at Christmas, aren't they?

■ THOSE switching over to the BBC may find themselves singing along to something far more acceptable, a seasonal version of *Perfect Day*, the BBC's brilliantly successful promo. The recent chill prompted me to call up Jane Frost, the corporate brand manager — brought into the BBC after working on Persil and Shell campaigns — who devised it. What a touch of commercially honed professionalism can achieve! The Christmas version has been doctored with a specially transformed wintry park backdrop, snowy topiary and a lot of (Jack) Frost's handiwork. She even managed to persuade a reluctant Director-General, John Birt, to have a special Christmas card made with the wintry scene and the strapline "Wishing You a Perfect Day".

By the way, *Perfect Day* has raised £1 million for Children in Need, and is about to be released internationally. Frost (Jane) has received no special bonus, but says she chose to work for the BBC because she wanted her small children to grow up in a cultured world with the same privileges she had enjoyed.

But how can she top *Perfect Day*? Well, in January the next phase of BBC brand-building gets into gear and she has persuaded the Dalai Lama to do a plug — he hums the World Service tune, *Lilli Burlero*.



A Merry Christmas from Auntie and John Birt

■ CLASSIC FM's Christmas card features little birds, as notes of music, sitting on the staves. I rushed to the piano to play the tune, but couldn't figure it out at all. A bit odd. But Classic is getting something right. Paul Gambaccini, the presenter so badly treated by Radio 3 and Radio 4, is returning to Classic FM, to present its popular chart show, as Richard Baker departs for Radio 3.

■ ONE of the most enjoyable columns in *The Guardian* is the one by Ian Mayes, the paper's newish Reader's Editor. In a move unmatched anywhere else in "Fleet Street", he is given space to muse publicly each Saturday about the grouses of the paper's hugely loyal readership, and its own lapses.

Last week he told the following story. A bleary-eyed couple were reading *The Guardian* on an early morning Underground trip to a far-flung appointment. "My God, we've got the wrong day," they said, after reading the dateline on *The Guardian*'s G2 tabloid section, which proclaimed it to be Wednesday, not Thursday. After a bit of an altercation they decided to turn back. "Near home," wrote Mr Mayes, "they realised the fault was ours, not theirs — too late to start out again." He added: "I completely identified with them." The column has shown that *Guardian* readers are literate and like things to be exact — and they are not slow to complain, be it about incorrect dates or large articles on pornographic films. Mr Mayes says readers are delighted to receive letters from him. Customer care is yet one more example of the way newspapers are cannily marketing themselves.

■ AMAZING what you pick up at Christmas parties. A senior person at GMTV told me this week that the show's presenters and producers were becoming ominously pompous because they had swallowed Labour's line and truly believe that Cabinet Ministers and the Prime Minister would prefer to appear on its breakfast show than the *Today* programme because more people watch it. Didn't this GMTV executive think this might be true? "Don't be daft," came the tart response.

This is in marked contrast to the air of self-confidence that buoys up *Today* even in the midst of its spat with Labour spin doctors. When *The Sunday Times* reported that Tony Blair didn't listen to *Today* I tackled the presenters, including John Humphrys and the BBC's news executives. They all said the same thing: "Don't believe it."

■ PHEW, what a relief to find this week's *Time Out* has stuck to Christmas topics. Last week's issue — bearing the cover line "Does size matter?" — was stuffed with so many full-frontals that it belonged on the top shelf. Two weeks earlier there had been an explicit sex directory. The content surely sits oddly with the magazine's sections on children's outings and family entertainment.

Tony Elliott, the publisher — and a father of two children, aged nine and seven — says: "It was unfortunate they were so close together." He debated with his wife about whether to leave the sex and body issue hanging around at home (they did, I didn't). "The average age of our readers is the late twenties, and I doubt whether more than 10 to 15 per cent have families. Bluntly, it's not a magazine for the middle aged," he says.

Classic FM's Christmas card: can you spot the tune?

■ FURTHER signs of the timely death of laddism? The *London Evening Standard*'s Friday *ES Magazine*, geared towards young males, is relaunching in January as a unisex product, with more fashion, lifestyle articles and a glossy front cover. Editor Adam Edwards said sadly that the men's columns (Gizmos, Tube Talk and Pike Fishing) are being shunted together on one forlorn page — a men's corner, rather like women's pages in the 1970s. Out completely are guides to the best strip clubs competitions to win a greyhound, but back come the stars and health. I predict it will look just like *The Sunday Times Style* magazine.

■ WATCHING the British Comedy Awards last Saturday, it struck me that as Jonathan Ross fleshes out, he is beginning to look (and sound) like Harry H. Corbett of *Steptoe & Son*. The fact that the sparkly dinner suit he has worn for the past three years is now too tight only heightened the resemblance.

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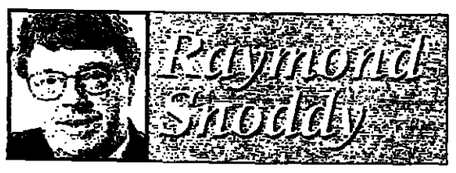
TV violence comes in all shapes and forms

THERE is just time to squeeze in a last serious television issue before Santa Claus movies and extended Christmas specials such as *Men Behaving Badly* start to dominate the small screen.

It is necessary to do so at a time when goodwill and good spirits are higher on most people's agenda than serious issues, because an interesting piece of research on understanding violence on television, published this week, might have escaped your attention.

The work, commissioned by the UK's main broadcasting groups, plus the Broadcasting Standards Commission, no pussycat when it comes to seeking out gratuitous violence and stopping it, reveals that most viewers do not spontaneously express concern about violence on television.

It is hardly a conclusion designed to attract headlines. How much more satisfying, not to mention newsworthy, to be able to blame violence on television for the disintegration of society and record public outrage on the subject.



The "qualitative" research, as they call it in the trade, was based on detailed discussions with 20 groups designed to be a national cross-section in terms of sex, age, class and region.

It found that while precise definitions of violence tend to be personal, most people are capable of distinguishing between violent acts that are more graphic, realistic and shocking and those that are "less real, less graphic and generally less perturbing". And guess what, most people do not see the slapstick violence of a James Bond movie, an old-fashioned western or even a cartoon as violent.

These findings by Andrew Irving Associates, a company with experience of investigating social policy issues, but who are newcomers to the media violence debate, which has been running for longer than *Coronation Street*, amount to common sense.

What is more, the groups were able to map out their own selected examples of types of violence linked to particular programmes and what it meant to them.

There is the "fantasy/harmless" category exemplified by James Bond and the "historical/educational" violence of Sharpe. The often blood-soaked episodes of *Casualty* is rated "everyday family drama", and then there is the "real life" of boxing and the news and "adult (unacceptable) drama" in the shape of the rape scene in the drama *London Bridge*. What is interesting is that for men all five categories amounted to acceptable viewing. Women drew the line at "adult (unacceptable) drama".

The study, which involved 124 people, of whom only 18 spontaneously mentioned concern about violence on television, found a range of attitudes. At one extreme there was a minority, mainly female and elderly, who disliked programmes with graphic violence. At the other end of the spectrum there was a male minority very tolerant of extreme violence.

Most viewers were in the middle and had an upper limit of some kind. They found very graphic, vivid portrayals of fictional or real-life violence off-putting.

The findings by Andrew Irving seem obvious, yet they do represent a fresh approach to the problems of violence on television. Until now, the tendency has been to count individual acts of violence on television, sometimes even "violent" acts in *Tom and Jerry* cartoons, and added them up as if they were all the same. Absurd comparisons are then made between years, or channels, suggesting that violence has gone up or down on a percentage basis.

Here, at least, researchers are trying to get to grips with the differences between portrayals of violence and the varying meanings ascribed to them by different people. It should be compulsory reading for those great experts on violence on television — backbenchers of all parties.

Inevitably, the survey is only the beginning. The Institute of Communications Studies at the University of Leeds will be taking the issue further using video-editing techniques. The Leeds research will try to uncover people's thinking by allowing them to produce their own versions of violent scenes.

Of course, not even Santa Claus could provide a definitive answer to the biggest question of all — the extent to which, if at all, fictional violence on television contributes to real violence. There are just too many variables. But until the media research equivalent of Fermat's last theorem is finally cracked, a cautious approach to explicit, gratuitous or sadistic violence on television might be wise.

● *Fresh research into understanding violence on television is available from the ITC Information Office, 33 Foley Street, London, W1P 7LB.*

BBC1 will offer 45 minutes of *Men Behaving Badly* on Christmas Day, but there are those who feel the charm of the year's smash hit is waning

Short on Christmas crackers

The festive TV line-up is surely the most disappointing for years, says **Carol Midgley**

The good news this Christmas is that there is a brilliant line-up of festive television programmes. Brilliant, that is, if you happen to be under 10.

For adults who have little other than television to boost their spirits as they confront a mélange of over-excited children and flagging relatives, the menu looks sparse. Unless you happen to have a fetish for the Spice Girls, the workings of Willy Wonka's chocolate factory or have time to become a cartoon addict, you might find the radio a more inspiring option on the day. The combined Christmas Day schedules of the BBC, ITV and Channel 4 must surely rank as some of the most unremarkable for years.

The BBC has spent £42 million on its package for the season and, to give credit where it is due, has at least tried to entertain us during Christmas evening, when three hit comedies are screened back to back on BBC1. From 9pm we are served with a 70-minute *One Foot in the Grave* special, starring Richard Wilson, followed by 45 minutes of *Men Behaving Badly* and half an hour of Nick Hancock's sports quiz *They Think It's All Over*.

Rather unfairly for the BBC, though, it all somehow feels a little flat, and that is almost certainly because we are spoilt by the memory of last year's comedy classic, the critically acclaimed *Only Fools and Horses*. The Christmas Day episode pulled in more than 18 million viewers and was followed by another episode on December 29 that was watched by a record audience of more than 24 million.

One Foot in the Grave, while still original, quality comedy, is surely now rather long in the tooth, and there are those who say that even the charm of this year's smash hit *Men Behaving Badly* is waning. Lovers of comedy might be better advised to tune into BBC2 at 2.15pm this year to watch half an hour of *Shooting Stars*.

Last year ITV was severely trounced by the BBC during Christmas week. It managed to get only one programme in the ratings top ten — *Coronation Street*. This year, however, there is scarcely any sense of a ratings battle between the two terrestrial giants. ITV is pitting the *Muppet's Christmas Carol* against BBC1's *Noel Edmonds' Christmas Presents* after the Queen's message. Its afternoon film, *Home Alone II*, is scheduled against BBC1's *The Mask*, a fairly uninspiring match. Perhaps the slot that will be the most fiercely contested among families is at 4pm, when BBC1 screens *The Flintstones* against ITV's *The Spice Girls Live in Concert*.

Channel 4, as is customary, offers a totally different schedule, opting for gravitas and culture. At 12.40 it screens a documentary tribute to Diana, Princess of Wales, followed by a film about the nurses who fought to save soldiers' lives during the First World War.

After the *Alternative Christmas Message*, this year delivered by Margaret Gibney, the Belfast schoolgirl who wrote to 150 world leaders asking for peace in the province, there is a performance of Verdi's *Requiem* with Luciano Pavaroti. In the evening we are offered the English National Opera's production of *The Damnation of Faust*. Over the season generally, of course, there are some potential gems, such as the BBC's *The Woman in White*, BBC2's comedy drama *Mothertime* and ITV's *The Canterville Ghost*, screened on Boxing Day.

For children, BBC1 offers a stunning line-up, starting with a Christmas *Teletubbies* (scheduled more than two hours later than usual to allow children to open their presents), *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *Peter and the Wolf* and, later, *Top of the Pops* and *Animal Hospital*.

ITV seems rather less inviting, but on Christmas morning it does offer the Hollywood movie *Honey I Shrunk the Kids*, and the first screening of the cartoon *Father Christmas and the Missing Reindeer*, featuring the voice of David Jason as Santa.

And for those who will inevitably complain that Christmas is losing its magic, let us not forget that an important television tradition will be broken this year. For the first time ITN, not the BBC, will bring us the Queen's Christmas message. There is speculation that it will be broadcast live for the first time and will definitely go out on the Internet. Christmas simply isn't what it used to be.

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media times

Will you vote for me? You must be joking!

The real lives of ten election candidates, filmed by amateurs, makes for an unusual documentary. **Raymond Snoddy** reports

Barbara Follet, the Labour MP for Stevenage, always made sure during the election campaign that voters were issued with Blu-Tack along with their posters and that there was wine to keep up spirits in her "War Room".

The archetypal new Labour candidate also knew how to thank supporters, such as Lord Attenborough, the film producer, who just happened to turn up on the doorstep of her Hertfordshire home.

"If you are watching this, Dickie," says Follett, peering into the camera, "I just want to say I think you are wonderful because you make us all feel special."

The old Labour campaign of Ken Livingstone had neither Blu-Tack, wine nor film-industry peers, and usually consisted of the solitary, thankless task of addressing the intercom systems outside windy blocks of flats in Brent East, North London.

"Will you vote for me on May 1?" Livingstone asks. "You must be joking!" the disembodied voice replies.

The Eurosceptic Conservative candidate for Northampton North, Tony Marlow, spreads the message hopefully, with "Keep the pound and Tony Marlow". The voters kept only the pound.

The insights into the real life of the election campaign of 1997 come from one of the most unusual political documentaries to be made in Britain — two programmes of *Campaign Confessions*, to be shown on BBC2 next week. Ten candidates were chosen from a variety of parties and constituencies as geographically diverse as the Western Isles and St Ives in Cornwall. But the trick was to ask the chosen candidates to nominate a friend or a relative to shoot the campaign with a Hi-8 video camera.

Charles Miller, the executive producer of *Campaign Confessions*, says: "We were looking for an alternative way of archiving what goes on in British politics by using Hi-8 cameras to get a greater sort of access, to get closer to the people."

The amateur camera operators included 13-year-old Cai Howells, son of Kim Howells, now the Education and Training Minister; Andre Eagle, the father of Maria, one half of Labour's Eagle twin MPs; and Simon Fletcher, Livingstone's researcher. Follett chose John Seaman, a 19-year-old student, after she saw his work in an exhibition at an art college.

All the camera operators were brought to London for some training with cameras and instructions on how to pan shots, close-ups and how to persuade their subjects to talk to camera twice a day.

They had to film between 10 and 20 one-hour tapes during the campaign. Miller ended up ploughing through 235 tapes for material that was in focus with good sound.

Miller, a former BBC producer who is now freelance, says: "I think that we achieved the original intention, which was to show politicians in the round, to show the interaction between the politics and the politicians at home with their children, and the stresses and strains on the rest of their lives, which show that, funnily enough, politicians are human beings."

Livingstone: is anybody there?

Follett: has everybody got wine?

In spite of the informal shooting, the two 50-minute programmes are not video diaries because the BBC kept full editorial control, although the candidiates could express any reservations they might have had.

As a result, the incident when an over-enthusiastic supporter of Andrew George, the Liberal Democrat MP for St Ives, burns a Tory poster at the election-night party has not made it. And it seems there was no usable footage when Kim Howells forgot to engage the handbrake of his car and saw it gently roll downhill while he was talking to camera.

One controversial piece of film involving the unsuccessful Conservative opponent of the Home Secretary Jack Straw in Blackburn is in the film. Geeta Sidhu gained the impression that someone in the Labour campaign was saying that she was anti-Muslim, and she flipped.

She retaliated by going around Blackburn in a loudspeaker van, saying: "Don't vote for a Jew. Jack Straw is a Jew. Jews are the enemy of the Muslims."

Sidhu, who lost heavily, later regretted her outburst and told Joan Bamber, 60, the former teacher filming her: "I said it because I was fuming. I must admit, I wish I hadn't done it."

The amateur camera operators seem to have enjoyed themselves greatly in their roles; sometimes Bamber was even heard to say: "Roll, baby, roll" as she was starting to film.

The outdoor scenes in the Howells campaign are by Steve Carter, a retired aircraft engineer, who found the process tiring and demanding, yet exhilarating.

"I was amazed how much work went into it. "To be a professional cameraman, you must be dedicated. I felt the strain. I was totally drained."

Now Charles Miller is working on another informal history — the story of the Labour Defence Review, filmed from inside the Ministry of Defence. But this time — partly for reasons of confidentiality and security — Miller will be operating the camera himself.

● *Campaign Confessions will be shown on BBC2 on December 27 and 28 at 4.25pm.*

Fleet Street turns on Tony

"New Labour is providing the most prim, priggish and paternalist Government of this country since Oliver Cromwell" — Alan Watkins in *The Independent on Sunday*. "Mr Robinson's actions shame himself, his Government and the principles on which his party and democratic governance stand. Better can be expected of those who hold public office in a democracy" — *The Observer*. "Mr Blair has many strengths. Among his greatest weaknesses is an obsession with not looking weak" — Andrew Rawnsley, *The Observer*.

There has been no more cheering development for the health and reputation of the British press in 1997 than the sudden recognition, especially by editors and commentators writing from the Left, that one of the historic duties of newspapers is to subject all governments to the most rigorous scrutiny.

Most editors were so exhilarated by the size of Tony Blair's triumph — or so mesmerised and inhibited by their failure to judge the mood of the people — that critical judgment was almost suspended after Labour's May 1 triumph.

Yet a government with so big a majority can easily be tempted to exercise power arrogantly. Its leading members can compare themselves with Cardinal Wolsey, its spin-doctors may think they can always fix or distort the news agenda. As Harold Macmillan observed, however, it is "events" that upset governments and "events" — the Formula One affair, the tax affairs of Geoffrey Robinson, the fate of lone parents and Labour's attack on John Humphrys after his Harriet Harman interview — have conspired to end Fleet Street's three-year honeymoon with Blair.

Suddenly, the British press has reverted to its proper role as gadfly to government, and the critics and satirists have come out of the closet. *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Observer* and *The Independent on Sunday* have all suggested that Robinson should resign unless he makes a better case for his offshore trusts. Suddenly, too, the spin-doctors, or their political masters, have lost their touch. Bullying editors, either by threats of libel writs (Robinson to *The Sunday Times* and *The Observer*) or intimidating letters (to Radio 4's *Today* or Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, to all national editors), simply puts them on their mettle.

The result of the bullying letter to the *Today* programme was that *The Guardian* devoted most of its front page to "The man Labour wants to gag" and suggested in a leading article that "arrogance of power" was fast becoming a Labour disease. Robinson's threat of libel was met the following Sunday by further front-page revelations in *The Sunday Times* and *The Observer*, a three-page investigation in Saturday's *Times*, and still more interest in the other nationals. Events also provided a nightmare conjunction of stories: a minister who (quite legally) avoids tax announcing new taxes on middle-class savers; and news of million-pound bonuses for City fat cats, combined with cuts in benefits for single mothers.

Since many voters backed Blair because they were revolted by City salaries, the moral was obvious. Now Blair had proved himself so merciless with the poor, argued Polly Toynbee in *The Independent*, he must be even crueller to the rich.

The satirists have also been having fun. Albion Parish News (Incumbent: Rev ARP Blair MA (Oxon)) is coming along nicely in *Private Eye*: "After all, wasn't Mary herself a single mum, and look how she coped, without any help from the State. So remember, it's easier for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven than a poor man (Matthew 5, 28-30, NLB)."

In *The Daily Telegraph* Craig Brown was predicting next year's news — when the Queen delivers her Christmas Day broadcast in informal conversation with Blair: "These broadcasts to the nation are universally popular," — explains Mr Blair, smiling to camera while putting a welcoming arm around the Queen's shoulder. "And this year I am delighted that Her Majesty is able to join me as my special guest."

The serious point was stated in a classic leading article on the duties of the press written by John Thadeus Delane, Editor of *The Times*, in 1852. Delane had been rebuked by Lord Derby, soon to become Prime Minister, for the "gross irresponsibility" of comments made by *The Times* on Louis Napoleon.

The press could not enter close or binding alliances with any statesmen of the day, nor surrender its permanent interests to the convenience of the ephemeral power of any government, he wrote: "The duty of the journalist is the same as that of the historian — to seek out the truth, above all things, and to present to his readers not such things as statecraft would wish them to know but the truth as near as he can attain it."

Christmas up for copywrite

Adland Christians want to reclaim the festival for Christ. **Meg Carter** reports

To some it is an unholy alliance. Yet a growing number of churches are adopting sophisticated advertising and marketing techniques to encourage more people to go to church. Luckily, they are attracting support from an unusual quarter — the advertising industry, where a group of Christians are donating their time and expertise.

"It's like a normal ad agency," explains Chas Bayfield, a creative at the London ad agency HHCL & Partners who is also a member of Christians in Media (CIM), an unofficial ad agency providing media communications to Christian causes. "We are believers and creatives, account planners and handlers, and media specialists who develop these campaigns in our spare time."

CIM knows the product it advertises inside and out and so can "push things a little further", Bayfield says. "Outsiders tend to believe in old stereotypes and to be overly cautious. We see beyond that."

CIM was set up four years ago by Francis Goodwin, managing director of the poster contractor Maiden Outdoor. He was involved in church advertising, providing hoardings for free. He placed a letter in the trade magazine *Campaign*, calling for others to support the cause.

Its latest work is "Copywriting Christmas", an advertising campaign launched this week by the Churches Advertising Network, an affiliation of representatives from the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist and Free Churches of Britain that has co-ordinated Christmas and Easter campaigns to boost church attendance for the past seven years.

This year's ads are about reclaiming Christmas for Jesus, says the Rev Tom Ambrose, director of communications for the Church of England Diocese of Ely and a member of the network. "Copyright law protects the products of someone's skill, creativity, labour and time. We reckon that that just about sums up God's input into Christmas and we are laying claim to that right."

The Copywriting Christmas campaign, launched by the Churches Advertising Network, an affiliation of representatives from various denominations

Christmas has been hijacked by commercial interests, he believes. Just this week a poster for Marks & Spencer, which replaces the "a" in Christmas with M&S's trademark ampersand, was criticised by church leaders. "Our message is that Christmas should be about the real thing," Mr Ambrose adds, unwittingly borrowing Coca-Cola's famous slogan.

As with previous campaigns, Copyright Christmas was produced with no budget. The network relies instead on donated time and services. Once a creative approach is agreed, CIM distributes a brochure to 30,000 churches. This gives details of items such as posters, bumper stickers, flyers, cards and a radio ad. Individual churches then buy what they want. The funds raised cover the cost of producing the materials.

"It's a very difficult brief. The ads must appeal to outsiders, who we want to come to church, but we must not frighten off people within the church," Ambrose admits.

Last year's ad was a case in point. It had a cartoon of the three kings, with the line: "Bad hair day? You're a virgin, you've just given birth and now three kings have shown up. Find out the happy ending at a church near you." It failed to secure ministers' support, despite positive press coverage.

Another complication, says Mr Ambrose is that "it's not just about selling a single brand, like Heinz. We're providing materials for many denominations."

A Christian circle of friends

Creators of the Levi's ads stitch up a sexy deal

■ TOP advertising network bosses will be spitting this week after missing out on the chance to acquire a slice of, arguably, the sexiest ad agency in the world.

Britain's Bartle Bogle Hegarty, famous for the likes of Levi's, Audi, Boddingtons and One 2 One, has finally succumbed after years of relentless courting from virtually every major player. It is to sell a 49 per cent share of its equity to the Chicago-based Leo Burnett network for an undisclosed sum (somewhere close to £25 million would be a good estimate).

BBH is the agency that many in the business — particularly creatives, who actuallly make the ads — see as a role model. Its consistent focus on business independence and its creative positioning earned it a reputation for integrity and excellence.

Since its 1982 launch, it has cleaned up at countless advertising awards ceremonies. Its glossy, art-directed work epitomised the 1980s. Think of Levi's "launderette" and "bath" commercials, the bloke on the Harley rescuing his girlfriend from the City dealing room, the K Shoes ad with the short-skirted woman cutting the balls off her boss's executive toy, "vorsprung durch technik".

The agency broke out of its fashion niche to become a mainstream player in the UK, albeit with mixed success working for the likes of Asda, WH Smith, Cadbury and NatWest. But, like its peers, it was destined never to break into the UK top ten without being part of an international network.

In the 1990s, BBH began to attract international clients on the back of the Levi's success. It used the annual Cannes Advertising Festival to showcase its wares, to great effect. It has twice been international agency of the year at Cannes and twice *Campaign*'s UK agency of the year.

BBH has led the trend that has seen small, local agencies creating work for the world (Levi's, Polaroid, Lego). It set up in Singapore in 1996 and plans to launch in the United States next year. Despite this, BBH has had to acknowledge that a relationship with a multinational is essential in order to have an effective global media delivery system. Leo Burnett seems a perfect fit. The number one agency brand in the US, it has 83 offices in 72 countries and has built a reputation for solidity and integrity based on having relatively few, large clients, such as Procter & Gamble, Kellogg's, McDonald's and Pillsbury.

BBH began to attract international clients on the back of Levi's success

Its reputation for never losing business took a knock this year, however, when it lost McDonald's, United Airlines and Ameritech computers business in the US. Chicago management responded quickly by shaking up the way the company bought media.

This deal will bring in a significant extra global media revenue stream, but its primary function is to make Leo Burnett sexier by association, especially as BBH made the approach.

BBH now has the money for expansion and, crucially, a deal allowing it to retain a 51 per cent controlling stake in perpetuity. The other agency big cheeses may bitch, but they would not have agreed to the minority stake. Perhaps the season of goodwill has got to me, but it really does look like a win-win for both parties.

■ FOR how much longer will it be good to talk? Rumours abound that BT is to take a new look at the estimated £160 million a year it spends on advertising and marketing.

But don't hold your breath. The trade press got overexcited this week, linking a rethink on the way BT buys media space with that £160 million to its ad account, held by Britain's largest agency, Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO.

Both accounts will be subject to statutory review, but the space-buying business will be reassessed in 1998, and AMV is considered to be safe until the year after at the very least.

Much as the public might seek respite from the "it's good to talk" mantra, it is unlikely that a company that has committed itself to doubling its adspend, claiming a £6 return on every £1 spent on ads, would ditch such an apparently successful campaign.

■ IF EVER a company should ditch its advertising, that company is the RAC. This year's pretentious campaign of documercials (its description) had "emperor's new clothes" written all over it.

Nobody, it appears, had the courage to tell the marketing department that the public doesn't give a fig that the RAC now sells bicycles, or what some internationally renowned guru thinks of the future. People want to know how long it will take the RAC to get there when they break down, and how much it will cost.

Inevitably, a new marketing director will arrive, and will review all the work. Do not expect the documercials to survive. In fact, the RAC is a strong contender for *The Times* worst ad of the year award (full best and worst lists on January 2).

Talking has proved good for BT

■ THERE is endless rubbish written about straitened times in the advertising and media industries; laments for the death of the liquid lunch; moans that they don't throw parties like they did in the good old days (ie, five years before the date of the moan).

What drivel. Who are these journalists? The Christmas party season began in early November and continues unabated. Any vaguely fashionable restaurant (and Langan's) is still heaving long after lunch. Evening parties are steaming with drunken, coked-up revellers who haven't heard that adland's in trouble.

Actually, the wildest parties have not been agency dos, but those thrown by media owners. Party of the season was arguably Channel 5's, where the highlight was the sticky situation on the stairwell, where the number of stripped and stranded modern young things running each other will have given David Elstein great cause for optimism.

● *Stefano Hatfield is Editor of* Campaign.

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RACING: RAIN CASTS DOUBT ON PARTICIPATION OF SENOR EL BETRUTTI AT KEMPTON PARK

Suny Bay turning into soft touch

BY CHRIS MCGRATH

AT WORCESTER, where the racecourse is on the banks of the Severn, it is sometimes necessary to inspect the going in a rubber dinghy. Things were not quite so bad at Kempton yesterday, but it would hardly have occasioned the groundstaff any surprise had they scattered the odd mallard or snipe when squelching over the turf that will, a week today, stage the *Pertemps King George VI Chase*. As it was, the only feathers flying were in the ante-post market.

Suny Bay, 4-1 with Coral two days ago, is now as short as 5-2 — on the basis that, if One Man has an Achilles' heel, it is more likely to become apparent on soft going. One Man, evens favourite to win his third consecutive King George, has always been at his best on fast ground, whereas his fellow grey flourishes in the mud.

"It was good to soft already, then we had a quarter of an inch in a downpour this morning," the Kempton *groundsman*, Frank Pengelly, said yesterday. "The forecast says it's going to stay damp and showery, so I don't think it'll change much now."

If he is right, Senor El Betrutti, the third member of this triptych of grey chasers, will restrict his Christmas exertions to the hunting field. The romantic possibilities surrounding the horse — a dashing winner of the Tripleprint Gold Cup last weekend, and one of only three horses trained on a Cotswold farm by Susan Nock — seem likely to be denied. "Soft ground turns him into an old dog," his trainer said. "He's hopeless on it. He was floundering through the puddles this morning. It would be a shame, as he has come out of his race *tremendously* well."

Uncertainty likewise infects the connections of Rough Quest. Having nursed their 1996 Martell Grand National winner back from injury, they were delighted by his comeback at Haydock last weekend. After yesterday's rain, Coral offers 8-1 from 10-1, but Terry Casey has not so much been debating whether to run, as auditioning for the lead in *Hamlet*.

While conceding that it remained a "distinct possibility" that Rough Quest will run, the trainer said: "We won't make a final decision until the morning. He had a nice canter today and is in excellent shape, but we'll see how he is tomorrow. He has eaten up well since Haydock, where he just lost a bit of weight."

One Man himself evidently preserves his magic, judging from the way some of it rubbed off on Brian Harding yesterday. The luckless Irishman had only returned from a year out — on medical grounds, after fracturing his skull in a fall at Newcastle — at Musselburgh on Tuesday. His first two rides were pulled up but yesterday, after escorting One Man at second lot, he made a stirring return to the winner's enclosure on Linden's Lotto at Catterick. Half an hour later, moreover, he was back again with Fen Terrier.

Linden's Lotto is trained, like One Man, by Gordon Richards, who believes his protege to have been treated with shabby inflexibility by the Jockey Club. "Rules are rules, but he has been all right for a long time in my book," Richards said. "I've had to try to bring him to life. He was in tears on the gallops when he was first told he would have to be out so long. This is terrific for a lad who has been so down. I've always had faith in Brian."

There was an appropriate symbolism to the fact that yesterday's double exhausted Harding's right to claim. He is now firmly back on his own two feet.

ADRIAN BROOKS

Connections will decide today whether Rough Quest runs in the King George

UTTOXETER

THUNDERER

12.40 Andanito
1.10 Toskano
1.40 RAFFLES ROOSTER (nap)
2.10 Barnageera Boy
2.40 Cadbury Castle
3.10 Listen Timmy
3.40 Arctic Camper

Timekeeper's top rating: 2.10 RAFFLES ROOSTER.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT — TOTE JACKPOT MEETING — SIS

12.40 EBF NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE
(Qualifier div I: £1,945: 2m 4f 110yd) (9 runners)

101 2-01 CHURCHTOWN GLEN 25 (G) (J & C Tipton) S Brookshaw 4-11-6 ... C Maude 105
102 424-33 ANDANITO 20 (F,G) (Bowsprit) Lady Herries 6-11-0 ... R Dunwoody 122
103 U-60 GOOD VIEW 20 (The Frame Racing Club) D Nicholson 5-11-0 ... R Johnson –
104 0- LISLAUGHTON ABBEY 263 (P Bradley) J Mackie 5-11-0 ... T Eley –
105 MARLBOROUGH (R Ogden) T Forster 5-11-0 ... P Carberry –
106 /5FP-23 NOT FOR PARROT 14 (R Broomhall) P Hobbs 5-11-0 ... G Tormey 106
107 45 PARTY ANIMAL 37 (D Coats) K Bailey 5-11-0 ... N Williamson 122
108 08 ADVENTURE PRINCESS 11 (I Morrison) G Barnett 4-10-9 ... Mr K R O'Ryan (7) –
109 4567- CLAUDIA ELECTRIC 341P (S) (Mrs M Johnsey) Miss C Johnsey 5-10-9 ... D Gallagher –

BETTING: 4-5 Andanito, 7-2 Churchtown Glen, 8-1 Party Animal, 10-1 Marlborough, 12-1 others.

1996: AGISTMENT 5-11-10 R Dunwoody (5-2) J Fitzgerald 13 ran

FORM FOCUS: Churchtown Glen beat In The Blood 2l in 8-runner novice hurdle at Ludlow (2m 5f 110yd, good). Andanito 2l 3rd of 14 to Polydamas in novice hurdle at Newbury (2m 110yd, soft). Good View 45l 10th of 16 to Eddy's Son in NH flat race at Warwick (2m, good to soft). Not For Parrot a distance 3rd of 10 to Supreme Charm in novice hurdle at Exeter (2m 2f, soft). Party Animal 17l 5th of 22 to Easy Feelin in novice hurdle at Worcester (2m 4f, good).

ANDANITO can open his account after promising Newbury effort

1.10 MOBILEFONE GROUP NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,185: 3m) (16 runners)

201 3P1-1P1 LOVABLE OUTLAW 16 (CD,G,S) (T Edmunds) Miss M Bowlby 6-12-0 ... P Midgley (3) 113
202 00/2-52 JALCANTO 41 (F) (A Price) R Juckes 7-11-8 ... Gary Lyons 101
203 4P532-2 HOODED HAWK 16 (G) (C Hamer) N Henderson 6-11-6 ... M A Fitzgerald 107
204 060/F1 OLIVER'S SECRET 15 (G) (C Fleet) M Pipe 7-11-3 ... A P McCoy 104
205 50L212 TOSKANO 14 (F) (Berkshire Components Ltd) D Williams 5-11-2 ... Mr S Durack (5) 112
206 F5/13-4 LUGS BRANNIGAN 9 (F) (J Dooler) M Baddock 8-11-2 ... C Maude –
207 3/F0P-3 COOL RUNNER 25 (B,S) (G Nock) Mrs S Nock 7-11-1 ... R Thornton 119
208 24053/4- SPRING TO GLORY 293 (BF,D,F,G) (A Byrne) P Hayward 10-11-1 ... B Fenton 114
209 42342-3 CALLEVA STAR 37 (J Burley) R Alner 6-11-1 ... A Thornton 112
210 10/P4-8 GRANHAM PRIDE 29 (B,S) M S Bennett & Bailey 7-10-7 ... N Williamson –
211 3/6/P03 CHARLAFRIVOLA 8 (F) (Mrs S Goodhead) T Goodhead 9-10-2 ... W Worthington –
212 2807/5- BARDINCELLI 331 (Gardens) M Wilkinson 7-10-0 ... W Marston 85
213 0/F-324 OWENS QUEST 8 (G,S) (London Racing Club OG) T Etherington 7-10-6 ... B Powell 118
214 1/14-46 WORDSWORTHFORBENEFITS 13 (B,F,S) (Mrs D Smith) C Smith 7-10-0 ... V Slattery 105
215 040/U/0 HIT THE FAN 14 (M Arnold) W Preston-Davies 8-10-0 ... C Llewellyn –
216 1P-4100 POLO PONY 9 (F,G) (Champagne Gentlemen) J Upson 5-10-0 ... J Supple –

BETTING: 7-2 Oliver's Secret, 9-2 Cool Runner, 7-1 Hooded Hawk, Toskano, 8-1 Lovable Outlaw, 12-1 others.

1996: COVERDALE LANE 9-10-11 Mr P Murray (9-2) Mrs S Smith 12 ran

FORM FOCUS: Lovable Outlaw beat Owens Quest (4lb better off) 5l in 11-runner novice handicap chase at Southwell (3m 110yd, good). Jalcanto 4l 2nd of 8 to Lovable Outlaw (6lb worse off) in novice chase at Uttoxeter (3m, soft). Hooded Hawk 13l 2nd of 9 to Glendoe in novice handicap chase at Fontwell (2m 2f, good to soft). Oliver's Secret beat Jobsagooden 10l in 15-runner maiden chase at Leicester (2m 7f 110yd, good). Toskano 3l 2nd of 10 to Market Gossip in novice handicap chase at Hereford (3m 1f 110yd, good) with Hit The Fan (levels) beaten a distance 7th. Cool Runner 3l 3rd of 11 to Wandering Light in novice handicap chase at Ludlow (3m, good).

COOL RUNNER stayed on well at Ludlow and is preferred to Oliver's Secret

1.40 ALAN POVEY SIGNS HANDICAP HURDLE
(£3,355: 2m) (6 runners)

301 4P14211 BURES 20 (D,F,G) (J Hewitt) Mrs J Brown 6-11-10 ... B Grattan (5) 123
302 1030-52 CENTAUR EXPRESS 8 (D,G,S) (Centaur Racing Ltd) A Streeter 5-11-9 ... T Eley 129
303 1/0/13- WINN'S PRIDE 272 (C,D,F,G,S) (Mrs W Bailey) R Hollinshead 6-11-0 ... S Wynne 134
304 1/6132- NIPPER REED 284 (BF,CD,S) (G Piper) R Simpson 7-10-13 ... A P McCoy 130
305 35-23 RAFFLES ROOSTER 21 (BF) (M Ledham) A Newcombe 5-10-6 ... P Carberry 140
306 13523 DIEGO 13 (CD,G) (P Douglas Engineering) M Pipe 4-10-4 ... R Johnson 128

BETTING: 3-1 Centaur Express, 7-2 Raffles Rooster, Diego, 9-2 Bures, 6-1 Nipper Reed, 8-1 Winn's Pride.

1996: TEJANO GOLD 6-11-0 R Dunwoody (9-2) P Bradley 7 ran

FORM FOCUS: Bures beat House Of Dreams 1¾l in 7-runner handicap hurdle at Newcastle (2m, good). Centaur Express 4l 2nd of 4 to Gutteridge in handicap hurdle at Market Rasen (2m 1f 110yd, good to soft). Winn's Pride 29¼l 3rd of 13 to Selatan in handicap hurdle at Bangor (3m, good). Nipper Reed 3l 2nd of 5 to Derisbay in handicap hurdle at Plumpton (2m 1f, good to soft). Raffles Rooster 7¼l 3rd of 10 to Welsh Silk in novice handicap hurdle at Newbury (2m 5f, soft). Diego 6½l 3rd of 7 to Balladur in novice handicap hurdle at Sandown (2m 110yd, good to soft).

RAFFLES ROOSTER goes well in the soft and will appreciate step back in trip

2.10 ST MODWEN CHASE
(Limited handicap: £4,332: 2m) (5 runners)

401 1221-14 SUBLIME FELLOW 20 (D,F,G,S) (R McGrath) N Henderson 7-11-10 ... M A Fitzgerald 149
402 /344F-6 RANDOM ASSAULT 13 (G,S) (Random Lot) D Nicholson 8-11-8 ... Mr D McPhail (7) 135
403 333-231 BARNAGEERA BOY 6 (D,G,S) (Mrs C Wilson) W Jenks 8-11-5 (5ex) ... T Jenks 150
404 12F5-34 MOUSE BIRD 29 (S) (D Pierce) D Gandolfo 7-10-9 ... R Dunwoody 159
405 F5F-643 CIRCULATION 29 (D,F,G,S) (C Bigley Partnership Ltd) D McCain 11-10-5 ... G Hogan (3) 94

BETTING: 11-8 Barnageera Boy, 9-4 Sublime Fellow, 7-2 Mouse Bird, 8-1 Random Assault, 66-1 Circulation

1996: SUPER TACTICS 9-11-3 P Henley (9-2) R Alner 4 ran

FORM FOCUS: Sublime Fellow 25l last of 4 to Native Mission in handicap chase at Newbury (2m 1f, good to soft); previously beat Coolteen Hero 9l in 3-runner handicap chase at Warwick (2m, good to soft). Random Assault 26l 6th of 9 to Cumbrian Challenge in handicap chase at Wetherby (2m 4f 110yd, good). Barnageera Boy beat Flying Instructor 6l in 5-runner handicap chase at Haydock (2m, good to soft). Mouse Bird 8¾l 4th of 7 to Sounds Fyne in chase at Newbury (2m 4f, good to soft). Circulation 17l 3rd of 7 to Xaipete in handicap chase at Sedgefield (2m 110yd, good)

BARNAGEERA BOY looks on the upgrade and can follow up fluent Haydock success

2.40 DOUGLAS ENGINEERING LTD JUVENILE NOVICES SELLING HURDLE
(3-Y-O: £1,896: 2m) (11 runners)

501 F GUNNERS GLORY 22 (I Bisley) Mrs L Stubbs 10-10 ... S Fox –
502 64 PATRICK 17F (T Pearson) D Burchell 10-10 ... R Dunwoody 71
503 5 AFTER HOURS 16 (After Hours Partnership) D Ffrench Davis 10-5 ... J Magee (3) 65
504 4 CADBURY CASTLE 16 (S Tindall) G Charles-Jones 10-5 ... X Aizpuru (5) 69
505 0 FIVE LIVE 22 (W Reed) S Cole 10-5 ... G Supple (5) 55
506 0 HOPPERETTA 6F (Rhiwlas Racing) B Palling 10-5 ... R Greene 83
507 0 MY BETSY 34 (Twyford Bloodstock) Mrs I McKie 10-5 ... S Curran 70
508 4 MY HERO 6F (B Brown & P Pepper Partnership) T Mills 10-5 ... C Llewellyn 82
509 0382 SILENT VALLEY 7 (V,BF) (Mrs S Cooper) Miss L Siddall 10-5 ... A Thornton 88
510 P SUN FAIRY 32 (T Brooks) D Burchell 10-5 ... D J Burchell –
511 0 ZANABAY 7 (P Deykin) G Fierro 10-5 ... Gary Lyons 49

BETTING: 5-2 Silent Valley, 3-1 My Hero, 5-1 Gunners Glory, Patrick, 8-1 Cadbury Castle, 16-1 After Hours, Five Live, 20-1 others.

1996: STONECUTTER 10-10 R Hughes (9-4 fav) M Channon 14 ran

FORM FOCUS: Patrick 17l 4th of 5 to Le Grand Gousier in 3yo novice claim hurdle at Wincanton (2m, firm). Cadbury Castle 23l 4th of 12 to Kingsdown Trix in 3yo novice hurdle at Fontwell (2m 2f 110yd, soft) with After Hours (levels) 26l 5th. My Betsy 35l 8th of 9 to Misty Cay in 3yo novice hurdle at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, good to firm). My Hero 4l 4th of 12 to Circle of Magic in 3yo novice selling hurdle at Taunton (2m 1f, good) with Hopperetta (levels) 22l 8th, Five Live (levels) 24l 9th and Gunners Glory (levels) fell. Silent Valley 4l 2nd of 12 to Tabriz in selling hurdle at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good) with Zanabay (levels) 57l 8th.

MY HERO may open account despite stamina limitations

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

101 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0 ... B West (7) 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing; F if flat. (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. The Times Timekeeper's speed rating.

3.10 WELLMAN PLC NOVICES CHASE
(£3,664: 2m 4f) (9 runners)

601 4-11 LISTEN TIMMY 22 (C,G) (Sentinel Racing Club) S Brookshaw 6-11-12 ... S Wynne 135
602 5/3212- ABSOLUTLY EQUINAME 273 (BF,G) (F Sansbury) M Heaton-Ellis 6-11-0 ... B Powell –
603 0P-P DANDE DOVE 50 (Dandelion Distribution Ltd) K Bailey 6-11-0 ... N Williamson –
604 154P2-P DONNINGTON 24 (F,G) (B Stewart-Brown) O Sherwood 7-11-0 ... J A McCarthy –
605 116/222 IN THE BLOOD 13 (G,S) (I Shaw) P Hobbs 6-11-0 ... R Dunwoody –
606 504584/4 ORGAN RECITAL 13 (Lady Anne Bentinck) O Brennan 6-11-0 ... M Brennan –
607 000- SEVEN POTATO MORE 231 (Sir John Barlow Bt) Sir J Barlow Bt 7-11-0 ... P Carberry –
608 000-PF SHEET LIGHTNING 15 (D Deacon) A Carroll 5-11-0 ... W Marston –
609 2FPP2-5 SIDELINER 17 (G) (A Hollingsworth) A Hollingsworth 9-11-0 ... Mr Edgar Byrne (7) –

BETTING: 4-6 Listen Timmy, 5-1 In The Blood, 6-1 Absolutly Equiname, 8-1 Donnington, 10-1 others.

1996: OBAN 6-11-6 G Bradley (100-30 fav) Miss H Knight 7 ran

FORM FOCUS: Listen Timmy beat Tejano Gold 12l in 4-runner novice chase at Uttoxeter (2m, good). Absolutly Equiname 1¾l 2nd of 14 to Ready Money Creek in novice hurdle at Newbury (3m 110yd, good to firm). Donnington pulled up in novice chase at Huntingdon (2m 4f 110yd, good), previously 1¾l 2nd of 8 to Marello in novice hurdle at Ayr (2m, good). In The Blood neck 2nd of 12 to Jet Files in novice hurdle at Towcester (2m 5f, good). Organ Recital 21l 4th of 9 to Ardronan in novice hurdle at Wetherby (2m 7f, good).

LISTEN TIMMY is poised for treble. Donnington may chase him home

3.40 EBF NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE
(Qualifier: div II: £1,945: 2m 4f 110yd) (8 runners)

1 5-1 LORD OF THE RIVER 23 (D,G) (B Stewart-Brown) O Sherwood 5-11-5 ... J A McCarthy 135
2 1221- ARCTIC CAMPER 240 (G) (Lady Harris) D Nicholson 5-11-0 ... R Johnson –
3 60-60 A VERSE TO ORDER 37 (T Bailey) Miss P Whittle 5-11-0 ... T Jenks 95
4 0- BABBLING BROOK 223 (A Stennett & Mrs J Stennett) P Hobbs 5-11-0 ... R Dunwoody –
5 PP-00 KING PADDY 14 (Mrs S Evans) Mrs S Johnson 5-11-0 ... R Thornton 50
6 008 LORD SABRE 8 (J Henderson) J L Harris 4-11-0 ... J Supple –
7 4-3 SWEET LORD 37 (I S Networking Solutions Ltd) M Bradstock 5-11-0 ... DOUBTFUL –
8 PPP-0 SHARP ALICE 13 (A Hollingsworth) A Hollingsworth 6-10-9 ... Mr Edgar Byrne (7) –

BETTING: 4-5 Arctic Camper, 7-4 Lord Of The River, 10-1 Babbling Brook, 16-1 others

1996: NO CORRESPONDING DIVISION

FORM FOCUS: Lord Of The River beat Music Therapy 7l in 16-runner novice hurdle at Windsor (2m 4f, good). Arctic Camper beat Cloone Bridge 5½l in 21-runner NH flat race at Punchestown (2m, good). Babbling Brook 88l 14th of 16 to Conchobor in NH flat race at Worcester (2m, good to soft). King Paddy 72l 10th of 15 to Laredo in novice hurdle at Hereford (2m 3f 110yd, good). Lord Sabre a distance 6th of 7 to Harlequin Chorus in novice hurdle at Market Rasen (2m 1f 110yd, good to soft)

LORD OF THE RIVER can make his hurdling experience tell against Arctic Camper

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
R Simpson	3	3	100.0	A P McCoy	26	94	27.7
O Sherwood	20	69	29.0	G Bradley	11	42	26.2
M Pipe	42	148	28.4	P Carberry	3	13	23.1
D Gandolfo	5	19	26.3	R Dunwoody	39	174	22.4
K Bailey	27	121	22.3	J McCarthy	5	27	18.5
S Brookshaw	14	63	22.2	N Williamson	26	152	17.1

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

Towcester

Going: soft

12.40 (2m hdle) 1, MARGI BOO (R Johnson, 9-1); 2, Welsh Spinner (J Culloty, 10-1); 3, The Executor (C Llewellyn, 14-1). ALSO RAN: 7-2 fav My Man In Dundalk, 11-2 English Invader (5th), 13-2 Lancer, 8 D'Naan (4th), Annabel's Baby, 12 Celtic Lilley, Mirster's Macam, 16 Lambson, Saltzong (6th), 33 Lofty Deed. 13 ran. 1¾l, 3l, 13l, 16l, 1¾l. M Sheppard at Ledbury. Tote: £11.20; £2.60, £3.30, £6.70. DF: £48.80. CSF: £92.26. Tricast: £1,165.91. Trio: £189.20.

1.10 (2m 6f ch) 1, SPARKLING CONE (N Williamson, 6-1); 2, Strong Vision (Mr R Wakley, 9-1); 3, Danes Cavalier (R Dunwoody, 2-1 fav). ALSO RAN: 5 Bank Avenue (5th), Scotby (4th), 9 Breakeal, 12 Marvier, 20 Ross Dancer, Vintage Claret (6th), 25 Ballydougan, Cambo, 33 Orphan Spa, Teeton Nishebull, 50 Tinker's Cuss. 14 ran. NR: Cloreoura. 12l, 1¾l, 1¾l, 11l, nk. Miss V Williams at Hereford. Tote: £6.10; £1.20, £2.90, £2.20. DF: £44.10. Trio: £74.80. CSF: £54.77.

1.40 (2m 5f hdle) 1, NATIVE FIELD (W Marston, 13-2); 2, Ever Smile (A P McCoy, 7-1); 3, Castle Secret (D J Burchell, 11-2). ALSO RAN: 13-8 fav Lansdowne (4th), 5 Noddle (5th), 7 Second Fiddle, 14 Fortunes Rose, 20 Sector's Mirror, 40 Mzy Lo Moss, 50 Decisive Spice, Spa Kelly, Sweeting. 12 ran. 3l, 6l, 17l, nk. D Wintle at Westbury-on-Severn. Tote: £10.40; £3.00, £2.20, £2.40. DF: £57.90. Trio: £72.60. CSF: £48.87.

2.10 (3m 1f ch) 1, HILL TRIX (L Harvey, 10-1); 2, General Tonic (R Dunwoody, 9-2); 3, Boots Madden (N Williamson, evens fav). ALSO RAN: 7-2 Poucher (5th), 8 Speedy Account (4th), 10 Native Venture (5th), 6 ran. NR: Cals Rub, Coblus, Lay It Off. 10l, 5l, 5l, 17l, 14l. K Bishop at Bridgwater. Tote: £9.50; £4.00, £3.20. DF: £28.80. Trio: £11.30. CSF: £50.81. Tricast: £78.55.

2.40 (2m hdle) 1, BRACEY RUN (C Llewellyn, 7-4, Richard Evans's nap); 2, Go Cahoots (C Rae, 14-1); 3, Ballet High (M A Fitzgerald, 13-8 fav). ALSO RAN: 8 Paddy's Storm (6th), 10 Fortunes Flight, 14 Classic Eagle, Shady Venture, 16 Celtic Season, Lunar Dancer, 20 Marble City (4th), 25 Bubble Boy (5th), 33 Cams Island, 50 Dragon's Back, Do The Jones, Lead Story, The Daddy. 16 ran. NR: Royal Swirsky, Sandy... 3l, 1l. J Old at Wroughton. Tote: £4.00; £2.00, £3.10, £1.90. DF: £47.30. Trio: £20.50. CSF: £29.52.

3.10 (3m 1f hdle) 1, PETE THE PARSON (M A Fitzgerald, evens fav); 2, Parliamentarian (S Gallagher, 13-8); 3, Captain Khedive (D Bridgwater, 9-1). ALSO RAN: 6 Friendly Knight. 4 ran. 13l, dist. J Old at Wroughton. Tote: £2.60. DF: £1.80. CSF: £3.01.

3.40 (2m flat) 1, RUSSELL ROAD (R Massey, 7-2); 2, Ardinnan (R Farrant, 9-4 jt-fav); 3, Deputy Leader (M A Fitzgerald, 7-1). ALSO RAN: 9-4 jt-fav Miner's Bill (5th), 16 C. D Boy, 20 Lord Max, Quickswood (4th), 25 Bertie Bavard, Market Springer, 33 Calliope, Most Vital, Second Amendment (6th), The Proud Pound, Warning Board, 40 Ramillion. 15 ran. NR: Father McCarten, Obliterate, Sharp Practice. ¾l, 2l, 10l, 5l, 2½l. D Nicholson at Temple Guiting. Tote: £4.00; £1.70, £1.90, £2.50. DF: £8.10. Trio: £18.90. CSF: £10.88.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £4,317.39 carried forward to Uttoxeter today).

Placepot: £1,076.10. Quadpot: £37.80.

Catterick

Going: good

12.30 (3m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, Clairesswan (R Thornton, 14-1); 2, Cash Box (5-1); 3, Diddy Rymer (7-2 fav). 11 ran. 4l, 1¾l. M Tompkins. Tote: £14.30; £4.20, £2.30, £1.10. DF: £56.90. Trio: £28.00. CSF: £70.52. Tricast: £276.05.

1.00 (3m 1f 110yd ch) 1, Linden's Lotto (B Harding, 7-2); 2, River Unshion (2-1 fav); 3, The Bud Club (12-1). 7 ran. 5l, 15l. G Richards. Tote: £5.20; £1.60, £1.10. DF: £3.60. CSF: £8.46.

1.30 (2m hdle) 1, Fen Terrier (B Harding, 7-4 fav); 2, Hobbs Choice (8-1); 3, Diamond Beach (4-1). 7 ran. 5l, 10l. F Murtagh. Tote: £2.30; £1.60, £2.90. DF: £9.80. CSF: £12.91.

2.00 (2m 3f ch) 1, Joe Jagger (R Garritty, 5-1 jt-fav); 2, Whitegates Willie (11-2); 3, Deel Quay (5-1 jt-fav). 10 ran. 4l, 3l. M Hammond. Tote: £4.20; £1.60, £1.90, £1.70. DF: £17.70. Trio: £15.90. CSF: £30.04.

2.30 (2m 3f hdle) 1, Take Cover (P Carberry, 5-1); 2, No Finer Man (4-1); 3, Point Royes (20-1). Swynford Pride 7-2 fav. 15 ran. NR: Castleroll. 2l, ½l. M Tompkins. Tote: £6.30; £5.00, £2.40, £7.20. DF: £18.90. CSF: £24.86.

3.00 (2m ch) 1, Prince Of Saints (R Garritty, 8-15 fav); 2, Fenwick's Brother (6-1); 3, Tapatch (13-2). 8 ran. NR: Kidnummy Castle. 4l, 15l. M Hammond. Tote: £1.60; £1.10, £2.50. DF: £2.70. CSF: £4.49.

3.30 (2m flat) 1, Gus Berry (X Aizpuru, 20-1); 2, Wellington Street (10-1); 3, Branch End (10-1). Over The Back 4-9 fav. 8 ran. NR: Vatholis. 1l, 2½l. D Forster. Tote: £21.50; £2.30, £1.90, £2.00. DF: £63.50. CSF: £185.37.

Placepot: £22.40. Quadpot: £12.50.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: Barnageera Boy (2.10 Uttoxeter)

Barnageera Boy, best on soft ground over two miles, reappears quickly after an impressive victory at Haydock last Saturday and can defy a 5lb penalty in a similar standard race this afternoon.

Next best: Andanito (12.40 Uttoxeter)

Southwell

Going: standard

11.50 (1m) 1, Bentico (G Faulkner, 11-4 fav); 2, Yeoman Oliver (13-2); 3, Saratoga Red (8-1). 15 ran. NR: Cabcharge Blue. 1¾l, ½l. Mrs N Macauley. Tote: £3.40; £1.10, £2.50, £2.00. DF: £20.90. Trio: £18.80. CSF: £17.25.

12.20 (7f) 1, Godmersham Park (D McKeown, 11-2); 2, Mr Paradise (12-1); 3, Chaluz (11-4 fav); 4, Gablesea (10-1). 16 ran. 1½l, ½l. P Felgate. Tote: £7.40; £1.20, £3.30, £1.60, £5.40. DF: £52.80. Trio: £45.50. CSF: £70.85. Tricast: £223.23.

12.50 (1m 6f) 1, Notation (A McCarthy, 3-1 jt-fav); 2, Course Fishing (8-1); 3, Whitley Grange Boy (3-1 jt-fav). Phany Dancer 3-1 jt-fav. 13 ran. 3l, 3½l. D Chapman. Tote: £4.50; £1.70, £1.90, £1.90. DF: £17.40. Trio: £26.70. CSF: £28.49. Tricast: £77.45.

1.20 (1m) 1, Joseph's Wine (R Cochrane, 5-1); 2, Elton Ledger (13-2); 3, Davis Rock (4-1). Pine Ridge Lad 2-1 fav. 15 ran. NR: Bannerol. 5l, 2½l. J Wharton. Tote: £7.80; £2.40, £2.80, £1.70. DF: £29.60. Trio: £41.80. CSF: £35.68.

1.50 (7f) 1, Live Project (S Whitworth, 20-1); 2, Be Warned (7-1); 3, Shades Of Love (8-1); 4, Time Of Night (14-1). Dearly 5-1 fav. 16 ran. Sh hd, ½l. R Craggs. Tote: £42.80; £6.20, £1.50, £3.50, £2.00. DF: £134.70. Trio: not won (pool of £333.32 carried forward to 3.20 Lingfield Park today). CSF: £163.07. Tricast: £1,168.34.

2.20 (7f) 1, I'm Tef (R Winston, 10-1); 2, Primary Colours (7-4 fav); 3, Essandess (14-1); 4, Naked Oat (14-1). 16 ran. ¾l, 1¾l. T Easterby. Tote: £15.50; £2.10, £1.30, £5.50, £2.80. DF: £21.90. Trio: £171.40. CSF: £27.09. Tricast: £269.32.

2.50 (7f) 1, Pip's Addition (T Sprake, 4-1); 2, Lady Laphroaig (6-1); 3, She's A Gem (11-4 fav). 15 ran. NR: Teeploy Girl. Nk, 3½l. J Glover. Tote: £4.70; £2.70, £1.40, £3.00. DF: £12.50. Trio: £47.40. CSF: £26.44. Teeploy Girl (7-1) withdrawn, not under starter's orders — Rule 4 applies to all bets, deduct 10p in pound.

3.20 (5f) 1, Ataan (S Righton, 4-1); 2, Nobalino (8-1); 3, Broadstairs Beauty (8-1); 4, La Doyenne (14-1). Canovas Heart 11-4 fav. 16 ran. NR: Ziggy's Dancer. 2l, ½l. R Marvin. Tote: £8.00; £1.30, £3.90, £2.90, £3.80. DF: £26.80. Trio: £80.50. CSF: £42.28. Tricast: £268.51.

Placepot: £135.50.

Quadpot: £61.60.

Hexham off

HEAVY rain throughout yesterday in Northumberland has resulted in the abandonment of today's scheduled meeting at Hexham. After the downpour officials at the track called a 5pm inspection and had no choice but to call the meeting off because of waterlogging.

RACELINE
0930 168+ COMMENTARY RESULTS
UTTOXETER 101 201
LINGFIELD 102 202
HEXHAM 103 203
FULL RESULTS SERVICE 168

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER

12.15 Papita. 12.45 Gold Clipper. 1.20 Captain's Day. 1.50 Just Another Time. 2.20 Robo Magic. 2.50 Free. 3.20 Sharp Imp.

GOING: STANDARD — SIS

DRAW: 5F-1M, LOW NUMBERS BEST

12.15 HOTSPUR AMATEUR RIDERS LIMITED STAKES
(£2,294: 1m 4f) (12 runners)

1 (1) 54-0 ADILOV 10J J Bridger 5-11-0 ... Miss R Gilman (5) –
2 (2) -360 DOSSES DAN 30J (B) B Preece 5-11-0 ... H Edgegrave (7) –
3 (8) 00-0 FLOW BACK 30J (B,D) G Enright 5-11-0 ... T McCarthy –
4 (4) 0/0/ LER CRU 865 (F) G Enright 8-11-0 ... S Findlay (7) –
5 (9) 6/00 PROFESSION 15 G Enright 6-11-0 ... Mrs M Enright (7) –
6 (7) 5000 SHAHIK 21 (S) K Cumerford 7-11-0 ... Dr A Klauber (7) 43
7 (10) 3301 WILDMOOR 6 (E,D,S) John Berry 3-10-13 ... G Elliott 36
8 (12) 0604 AREISH 31 J Ffitch-Heyes 4-10-11 ... P Scott 28
9 (11) 0435 LAUREL SEEKER 16J Mrs A Perrett 3-10-9 ... Mrs A Perrett –
10 (5) 0045 NOBLE HERO 204 K Morgan 3-10-9 ... B R Foster (7) 48
11 (6) 0004 AQUAVITA 15 J S Moore 3-10-6 ... Mrs S Moore (5) 27
12 (3) 0830 PAPITA 144 (BF,F) N Lampard 3-10-6 ... J Crowley (5) –

6-4 Wildmoor, 2-1 Laurel Seeker, 11-2 Papita, 10-1 Aquavita, 14-1 Noble Hero, 16-1 Adilov, 20-1 Areish, 25-1 others.

12.45 ATROPOS HANDICAP
(Div I: £1,944: 1m 2f) (14)

1 (14) 0000 KI CHI SAGA 9 (C) G L Moore 5-10-0 ... S Whitworth 60
2 (12) 5422 LEGAL ISSUE 25 (BF,F,G,S) W Haigh 5-9-9 ... T Sprake 59
3 (4) 0022 HAYDN JAMES 13 (B) P Harris 3-9-8 ... M Fenton 57
4 (3) 0020 SEJAAL 9 (F) R Flower 5-9-4 ... S Drowne –
5 (11) 2322 GUESSTIMATION 11 (BF,D,F,G,S) J Pearce 8-9-2 ... M Wigham 59
6 (1) 2550 OUR SHADEE 295 (C,F,G) K Ivory 7-9-0 ... C Scally 61
7 (9) 4518 MULTI FRANCHISE 24 (CD,F) R Flower 4-8-13 ... Dane O'Neill 58
8 (5) 2615 JUBILEE SCHOLAR 13 (CD) G L Moore 4-8-12 ... A Clark 54
9 (13) 0230 GOLD CLIPPER 13 (B) M Ryan 3-8-9 ... D Biggs 63
10 (8) 0060 MEMORY'S MUSIC 13J M Madgwick 5-8-6 ... W Ryan 60
11 (8) 0000 MISLEMANI 25 (F,G) A Newcombe 7-8-5 ... A Mackay 45
12 (7) 5464 NA HUIBHEACHU 17 J S Moore 6-8-4 ... P P Murphy (3) 54
13 (10) 0000 COASTGUARDS HERO 9 M Usher 4-8-3 ... J Marshall 29
14 (2) 40/0 LITTLE MISS RIBOT 7 (CD,F) R O'Sullivan 7-8-1 ... J Quinn 32

7-2 Legal Issue, 4-1 Haydn James, Guesstimation, 7-1 Jubilee Scholar, 8-1 Multi Franchise, 12-1 Our Shadee, 14-1 Gold Clipper, Na Huibheachu, 16-1 others.

1.20 ATROPOS HANDICAP
(Div II: £1,944: 1m 2f) (14)

1 (13) 5000 FORT KNOX 9 (B,C,F,G) R Flower 6-9-12 ... S Drowne 54
2 (14) /00/ RUBY ESTATE 655J N Graham 6-9-8 ... Dane O'Neill –
3 (11) 6603 BILLADDIE 7 (C) R Flower 4-9-6 ... R Cochrane 60
4 (7) 0680 CAPTAIN'S DAY 9 (V,CD) H Collingridge 5-9-2 ... M Fenton 66
5 (1) 0008 MUHANDIS 21 (B,F) G L Moore 4-9-1 ... Candy Morris 46
6 (2) 4352 WITHOUT FRIENDS 21 (F,G,S) J Ffitch-Heyes 3-8-13 ... A Whelan (3) 64
7 (4) 4030 ED'S FOLLY 35 S Dow 4-8-13 ... P Doe (7) 44
8 (3) 3503 INKWELL 31 G L Moore 3-8-10 ... A Clark 51
9 (9) -003 DANCING DESTINY 25 R Beckmann 5-8-7 ... M Tebbutt 53
10 (8) 0003 MAGAZINE GAP 17 (V) Pat Mitchell 4-8-6 ... Amanda Sanders 64
11 (12) 0-00 SHARAZAMATAZ 15 K Ivory 3-8-4 ... Martin Dwyer –
12 (6) 0202 SILVER HARROW 53 (F) A Newcombe 4-8-4 ... J Quinn 30
13 (10) 2354 PROTARAS BAY 24 P Billgen 3-8-2 ... N Adams 53
14 (5) 0000 MISS IMP 31 P Mitchell 3-7-10 ... R Carlisle –

7-2 Protaras Bay, 11-2 Silver Harrow, 13-2 Dancing Destiny, 7-1 Inkwell, 8-1 Captain's Day, 10-1 Billaddie, Ed's Folly, 14-1 others.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Lingfield Park: 1.20 Captain's Day. Uttoxeter: 1.10 Granham Pride.

1.50 WITCH OF ENDOR CLAIMING STAKES
(2-Y-O: £2,294: 5f) (6)

1 (3) 0261 JUST ANOTHER TIME 36 (C) J Berry 8-13 ... P Roberts (3) 62
2 (5) 1633 PRIVATE SEAL 7 (BF,D,F) G L Moore 8-13 ... A Clark 86
3 (6) 4010 RISKY WHISKY 11 (B,CD,F) J Berry 8-13 ... P Bradley (7) 67
4 (1) 0023 SUPER GEIL 11 (V,D) C Dwyer 8-6 ... A Whelan (3) 62
5 (2) 8540 DANDE TIMES 7 K Ivory 8-5 ... Martin Dwyer 48
6 (4) 0024 MISS BANANAS 11 T Bill 8-0 ... N Carlisle 51

2-1 Just Another Time, 5-2 Private Seal, 5-1 Risky Whisky, 6-1 Super Geil, 7-1 Miss Bananas, 12-1 Dande Times

2.20 LE REVE HANDICAP (£3,404: 6f) (10)

1 (4) 5510 APOLLO RED 17 (CD,F,S) G L Moore 8-10-0 ... Candy Morris 86
2 (7) 0521 PALACEGATE TOUCH 36 (B,C,D,F,G,S) J Berry 7-9-7 ... P Bradley (7) 81
3 (6) 0560 THAT MAN AGAIN 21 (F,G) S Williams 5-9-6 ... Dane O'Neill 79
4 (1) 0025 ROBO MAGIC 21 (BF,CD,F) L M Hall 5-9-5 ... R Hughes 88
5 (9) 0160 RAMSEY HOPE 6 (V,C,D,F) C Fairhurst 4-8-13 ... R Cochrane 80
6 (10) 4032 SCISSOR RIDGE 17 (CD,F) J Bridger 5-8-13 ... J Quinn 90
7 (2) 4030 PLEIN GAZ 47 (D,S) J Bodger 4-8-11 ... N Adams –
8 (8) 1555 HALF TONE 17 (B,C,F,G,S) R Flower 5-8-10 ... A Clark 78
9 (3) 0300 JOHNNY STACCATO 17 (D,G,S) R O'Sullivan 3-8-8 ... D Biggs 82
10 (5) 0111 CHIPSTEAD BAY 7 (CD) K Ivory 3-8-3 (7ex) ... C Scally 81

2-1 Chipstead Bay, 4-1 Palacegate Touch, 9-2 Robo Magic, 11-2 Apollo Red, 13-2 Scissor Ridge, 8-1 That Man Again, 12-1 Ramsey Hope, Half Tone, 20-1 others.

2.50 LYDIA STAKES (2-Y-O: £3,234: 1m) (11)

1 (10) 00 CARADOC 52 S C Williams 9-0 ... S Drowne –
2 (6) 053 FLIGHT 120 S Dow 9-0 ... W Ryan –
3 (3) 00 FREE 95 Mrs M Reveley 9-0 ... M Wigham –
4 (5) 6 HANUMAN HIGHWAY 20 M Tompkins 9-0 ... D Biggs 50
5 (1) 3 PLEASUREDANCER 75 W O'Gorman 9-0 ... Emma O'Gorman –
6 (7) 0000 RED RISK 36 P Harris 9-0 ... J Quinn 44
7 (4) 00 SAMMY'S SHUFFLE 21 R Flower 9-0 ... A Clark 35
8 (11) 000 TECHNICIAN 151 M Jarvis 9-0 ... R Cochrane –
9 (9) 050 FIRST IDEA 118 S Dow 8-9 ... P Doe (7) –
10 (8) 000 MERCH RHYD-Y-GRUG 80 D Williams 8-9 ... M Tebbutt –
11 (2) 04 SCOTLAND BAY 9 R Hannon 8-9 ... Dane O'Neill –

9-4 Pleasuredancer, 7-2 Scotland Bay, 9-2 Flight, 6-1 Free, 8-1 Hanuman Highway, 12-1 Technician, 16-1 Caradoc, First Idea, 33-1 others.

3.20 LADBROKE ALL-WEATHER TROPHY HANDICAP (Qualifier: £2,921: 7f) (16)

1 (12) 2000 ROYAL CARLTON 21 (CD) G L Moore 5-9-12 ... M Wigham 76
2 (8) -000 COSSACK COUNT 17 (G,S) S Dow 4-9-12 ... P Doe (7) 63
3 (15) 0004 LA PETITE FUSEE 9 (D,F,G) R O'Sullivan 6-9-12 ... R Hughes 61
4 (6) 2411 ITSINTHEPOST 161 (C,D,S) V Soane 4-9-10 ... R Cochrane 70
5 (3) 1005 IVORY'S GRAB HIRE 82 (B,C,D,F) K Ivory 4-9-7 ... Martin Dwyer 60
6 (13) 1060 REGAL SPLENDOUR 212 (C) J Bridger 4-9-6 ... T Sprake 72
7 (1) 0081 IVOR'S DEED 36 (CD,F) Miss G Kelleway 4-9-5 ... A Whelan (3) 68
8 (4) 0000 LIFT BOY 17 (BF,CD,F,G) G L Moore 6-9-4 ... Candy Morris 71
9 (5) 2610 MATOAKA 53 (BF,F) V Soane 3-9-2 ... R Perham 57
10 (11) 0043 SHARP IMP 15 (B,BF,C,D,F) R Flower 7-9-2 ... A Clark 69
11 (16) 2011 CHURCHILL'S SHADOW 21 (CD) B Pearce 3-8-13 ... W Ryan 71
12 (14) 0026 SIZZLING 21 (F) R Hannon 5-8-10 ... Dane O'Neill 67
13 (10) 0003 MOGIN 15 (D,F) T Naughton 4-7-10 ... J Quinn 72
14 (2) 0200 AEGEAN SOUND 15 (G) K Ivory 3-7-10 ... N Adams 75
15 (9) 0000 CHIEF'S LADY 21 J S Moore 5-7-10 ... D O'Shea 51
16 (7) 0000 LITTLE PILGRIM 48 T Jones 4-7-10 ... N Carlisle 64

7-2 Churchill's Shadow, 11-2 Itsinthepost, Ivor's Deed, 13-2 Sharp Imp, 6-1 Mogin, 10-1 La Petite Fusee, Matoaka, 12-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley, 3 winners from 11 runners, 27.3%; V Soane, 5 from 19, 26.3%; J Berry, 38 from 179, 21.2%; C Fairhurst, 3 from 15, 20.0%; P Harris, 15 from 86, 17.4%; W O'Gorman, 21 from 123, 17.1%; Miss G Kelleway, 33 from 201, 16.4%

JOCKEYS: Emma O'Gorman, 23 winners from 122 rides, 18.9%; C Scally, 9 from 50, 18.0%; W Ryan, 37 from 213, 17.4%; R Cochrane, 69 from 409, 16.9%; Mr T McCarthy, 5 from 33, 15.2%.

SAILING

Toshiba makes light of early shortcomings

BY EDWARD GORMAN

LUCK or skill, or both? It is sometimes difficult in sailing to disentangle one from the other. In the third leg of the Whitbread Round The World Race, the very tricky conditions have produced constant changes in race order and a fair degree of puzzlement among skippers about who will emerge ahead by the finish in Sydney, and why.

Yesterday, Paul Standbridge and his rejuvenated crew on *Toshiba* were back in the lead as the crews tasted their first day's reaching since setting out from Fremantle last Saturday. Standbridge was just a whisker ahead of Paul Cayard, on *EF Language*, with George Collins, on *Chessie Racing*, third.

With light airs once again in force, and still lighter conditions to come as the fleet closes on the western entrance to the Bass Straight, this is still anyone's race as the pendulum swings favouring, in turn, the northernmost boats, *Toshiba*, *Chessie*, *Silk Cut*, *Merit Cup* and *EF Education*, then the middle-fleet runners, *EF Language* and *Swedish Match*, and then the two in the south, *BrunelSunergy* and *Kvaerner Innovation*.

However, even in these lottery-style conditions, a couple of skippers have demonstrated consistently good speed, remaining in the top handful throughout the leg. Cayard is one; another is Standbridge, who is blending his crew to get the best out of it, something that his predecessor on *Toshiba*, Chris Dickson, failed to do.

The poor showing in the first leg suggested a worrying speed problem in light airs on the Team Dennis Conner-managed boat. This has not been evident on this leg and yesterday Kelvin Harrap, a crew member, sent an upbeat report as *Toshiba* sailed away from both *Silk Cut* and *Chessie Racing*, using a new-generation, straight-luffed reacher. "Everyone is fairly excited at the way our new sail performed, perhaps answering some of our light-air speed concerns from the disappointing first leg," Harrap said.

George Collins, who joined his boat in Fremantle to become the only owner-driver in the fleet, compared the traverse of the Great Australian Bight to sailing in Chesapeake Bay in July, so benign have been the conditions. "Too many sail changes, though, have made it exhausting. "The boat doing the most changes should be recognised just like the best 24-hour run on each leg," Collins said. "It has become a big-boat dinghy race among *Toshiba*, *Silk Cut* and *Chessie Racing*, all in full view of each other," he said.

STANDINGS: 1, *Toshiba* (1,074.5 miles to finish); 2, *EF Language* (at 3.2 miles); 3, *Chessie Racing* (7.4); 4, *Silk Cut* (7.6); 5, *Kvaerner Innovation* (14.2); 6, *Swedish Match* (16); 7, *Merit Cup* (18.7); 8, *EF Education* (27.7); 9, *BrunelSunergy* (28).

HOCKEY

Harleston aiming for winter peak

BY CATHY HARRIS

HARLESTON Magpies will enter the winter break at the top of the women's East League if they beat Ashford tomorrow. St Albans, the leaders, who have fought back well from the disappointment of relegation from the National League last season, do not have a game.

St Albans' hopes of an immediate return to the top flight have been hit by the departure of Tara Jellie, the American midfield player, who has returned to the US after making a significant contribution this season. Brian Parker, the St Albans coach, said that her attacking play would be missed. "Our main problem is going to be scoring goals. We want to bounce straight back, but it's a tough league and there's a long way to go," he said.

Sarah Pinkstone, the Sevenoaks forward, will miss the match with Welwyn Garden City tomorrow after sustaining a triple fracture of her cheekbone against Bury St Edmunds last week. Bury will draw level with St Albans if they beat Cambridge City.

STANDINGS: South: 1, Horsham 21 pts; 2, Hendon 20. West: 1, St Austell 23; 2, Exmouth 22. North: 1, Chester 20; 2, Blackburn 19. East: 1, St Albans 22; 2, Harleston 21. Midlands: 1, Hampton 22; 2, Kettering 19.

□ Great Britain's past two Olympic men's teams have contained only English players, but such dominance could soon change (Sydney Friskin writes). Olympic hopefuls from Scotland and Wales are among a group of 28 players invited to a Great Britain development camp at Barcelona from January 9 to 12.

MEN'S DEVELOPMENT SQUAD: A Wilkinson, A West, D Haydon, D Selick, J Bleby, P Aldridge, P Wilcs, S Lanyon, A Todd, A Garratt, D De Pres, J Davies, J Loose, N Taylor, P Wicken (all England), A McGregor, D Mitchell, L Docherty, N Stott, A Balchin, G Menzies, M Ralph, S McArtney (all Scotland), A Evans, G Egan, R Joyce, E Bevan, J Davies-Yandle (all Wales)

CRICKET

Denmark to compete in NatWest

DENMARK will join Holland in the NatWest Trophy in 1999 to give an international dimension to the expansion of the 60-over tournament, which will be contested by 60 teams.

Denmark will have to play away from home during their first season, but may be allowed to play at home in 2000 depending on the quality of a grass square that is being laid at Brondby.

The opposition will comprise existing participants — Scotland, Ireland and Holland, along with the 18 English first-class counties — and 38 amateur teams representing the new county boards in England.

Robin Smith, 34, the former England batsman, and Shaun Udal, the off spinner, will today learn which of them is to lead Hampshire next season. Both players have been ordered to attend the County Ground today to learn the decision of a committee formed to choose the successor to John Stephenson which met last night.

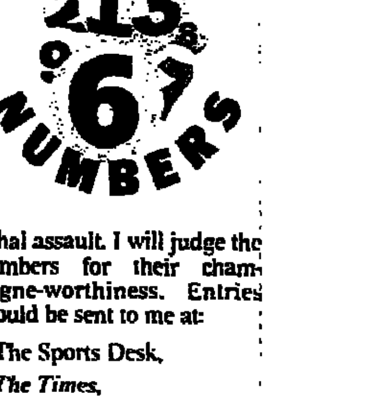
Saqlain Mushtaq, 21, the Pakistan off spinner, has signed a contract to continue as Surrey's overseas player next summer.

England Under-19 were again let down by their batting on the second day of their match against South African Students at Port Elizabeth yesterday.

England, who have yet to exceed 300 on the Natwest-sponsored tour, were bowled out for 192 in reply to the Students' 315 for nine declared. Six batsmen scored between 17 and 44, yet their innings consisted of a series of mini-collapses, three wickets falling with the score on 38, two on 94, another on 96 and three more on 175. Graeme Swann was England's top scorer.

Win Christmas fizz

BY SIMON BARNES



MAGIC numbers and free champagne: what more could possibly be desired by anyone with sporting blood in the veins? Once again, *The Times* is able to offer bottled bliss, in the form of Nicolas Feuillatte champagne, to anyone who contributes a Magic Number this Christmas.

A Magic Number is one that carries immense sporting weight. Some numbers carry weight for all time, such as Don Bradman's 99.94 or Torvill and Dean's 6, but every year throws up new numbers. How about 78, 0, and 0? These are the numbers for Michael Schumacher: the 78 points he was docked for crashing into Jacques Villeneuve, the zero points he was left with and the zero fine he was given for this potentially lethal assault. I will judge the numbers for their champagne-worthiness. Entries should be sent to me at:

The Sports Desk,
The Times,
1 Pennington Street,
London E1 9XN

or by fax to 0171 782 5211.

The final collection is to be published shortly after Christmas, so do it soon.

FOOTBALL: LIVERPOOL PRODIGY WARNED BY ENGLAND COACH

Caution from Hoddle challenges pace of Owen's emergence

By Matt Dickinson

WHEN it comes to Michael Owen, there is no doubt that Glenn Hoddle likes what he sees. It is what the eye cannot detect, though, the inner workings of the young striker's mind, that the England coach remains uncertain about and it was the cause yesterday of a surprise shot across the Liverpool player's bows.

That there is little wrong with Owen's feet was proved on Wednesday night when, three days after his eighteenth birthday, he produced a remarkably assured performance in England Under-21s' 4-2 victory over Greece, his exceptional pace a threat for defenders of any age or calibre.

Keeping his size 6½ boots rooted to the ground, though, is evidently a troubling topic that has done the rounds at Lancaster Gate and it was something that Hoddle unexpectedly brought into the public domain yesterday.

"There are certain things he needs to stamp out of his game and from his off-the-pitch situation as well," Hoddle said, raising more questions than he answered. "I'm not going into details, but he's not the finished article that everyone says he is. The boy has extreme potential and extreme talent, as has Rio Ferdinand [the West Ham United defender]. But we will be keeping a steady eye on them to see how they progress.

"We have spoken about so many youngsters before and the potential has not come through. It is very difficult nowadays with everyone hypeing things up and the minute they think they have arrived they stop still. They [Owen and Ferdinand] must not allow that to happen.

Owen: precocious talent

"Players like Alan Shearer, Teddy Sheringham and even Stuart Pearce at his age are still learning things about the game. I am still learning, so for any young player to think he has arrived is wrong. We can't give them a pill to learn. It only comes from the player.

"The runs young Michael makes are exceptional for a player of his age. He really has a good perception of the game. But he is a lad who I have seen in the past in a couple of situations show he is still only a youngster and there is still room for improvement."

Given that Ferdinand had to be disciplined by Hoddle before he had even been capped, it is safe to assume that the England coach was not issuing idle threats.

It also, perhaps, reflected that Owen plays for Liverpool, a club not renowned for the self-discipline of its players. Jamie Carragher and Danny Murphy were two of the culprits ticked off after high jinks among the England under-21 players on the trip to Rome, while the Spice Boy tag — whether it be a lazy label or deserved nickname — will remain with the Anfield dressing-room as long as the team continues to underachieve.

Owen, so far, has shown no signs of straying from the straight and narrow. Indeed, at Anfield he is mocked as an Alan Shearer clone as much for his straight — some might even say dull — image as his knack for scoring goals.

Dealing with the prying and intrusions that are the flip-side to earning thousands of pounds a week is likely to prove as testing as maintaining the precocious talent that has already made him a long shot for inclusion in the senior World Cup squad for France.

Everton, struggling in the lower reaches of the FA Carling Premiership, yesterday denied that their captain, Gary Speed, has held talks with Newcastle United.

The Wales international midfield player had been linked with a move to St James' Park in an exchange deal involving Darren Peacock, the Newcastle defender.

It was a lucrative time to be a plumber in the Yorkshire village of Emley yesterday as heavy rain followed the snow of Wednesday afternoon. Peter Matthews, nevertheless, had no hesitation in downing his tools to spend the day away from work. As the chairman of Emley, Matthews was determined to enjoy the aftermath of their heroic victory on penalties against Lincoln City, which earned an FA Cup third-round tie against West Ham United. Emley won 4-3 in the shoot-out after the teams had finished level at 2-2.

"There are work days and there are Emley Football Club days, and this is very definitely a football day," Matthews, revelling in the calls from reporters and well-wishers, said.

Gross warms to Pleat as potential colleague

By Matt Dickinson and Richard Hobson

CHRISTIAN GROSS, who appears to need as much help as he can get in his worsening predicament as Tottenham Hotspur manager, has met David Pleat to discuss the club's vacant position of director of football.

While Gross claimed no appointment was imminent, it looks likely that Pleat, a former Spurs manager himself, who was sacked as Sheffield Wednesday manager earlier this season, will take up the new position next month.

The pair appear to have bonded well in their two-and-a-half-hour chat, with Gross claiming: "It was very interesting. He is a man who loves soccer and anybody who loves soccer is interesting to me. Before I came to the club, Alan Sugar [the chairman] said that he needed someone in this position. Maybe David Pleat will do it, but there is no decision. We need to talk more to get the feeling together."

Gross stressed that while Pleat would have youth and scouting responsibilities, he would not negotiate contracts with players or dictate who to buy. The demarcation of roles clearly needs further discussion with the Swiss coach admitting that Pleat may find it difficult not to meddle in first-team affairs.

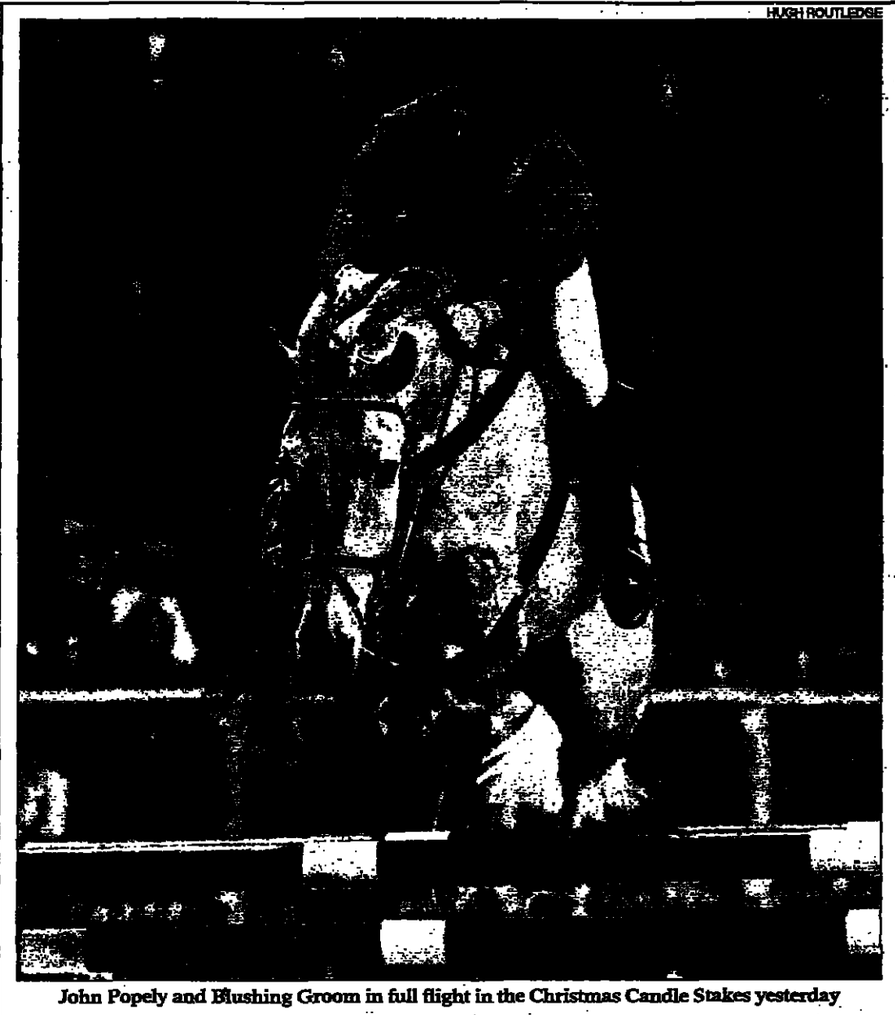
"Over the last 24 years he was on the pitch as a manager and when you have that job from day to day, it is an obsession and very difficult to stop," he said. "It is not easy to take a different role. Scouting is a problem we have to review here and David knows the English game and players very well."

Gross has yet to make a signing at Spurs and, despite talking with Everton, is unlikely to bring in Andy Hinchcliffe, the left-back. Howard Kendall, the Everton manager, offered a swap deal in the hope of luring Les Ferdinand, Chris Armstrong or Steffen Iversen, but Ferdinand is staying put and the other two are injured.

Fears that Gary McAllister would miss the World Cup finals next summer have been removed after keyhole surgery on his injured knee, which revealed a small cartilage tear rather than ligament damage. McAllister, the Coventry City and Scotland midfield player, will be out of action for two months.

Coventry have completed the signing of George Boateng, the Holland Under-21 captain. Boateng, 22, who can play at right back or in midfield, cost £250,000 from Feyenoord, who had originally valued him at £4 million. Boateng, who would have become a free agent next summer when his contract expired, rejected an offer from Udinese, the Italian Serie A side.

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



John Popely and Blushing Groom in full flight in the Christmas Candle Stakes yesterday

Showtime races back to form to give Skelton cracking start

By Jenny MacArthur

NICK SKELTON, who said he had barely time even to look at the schedule for the Olympia showjumping championships before his arrival at the show yesterday because he had been too busy moving house, produced a dazzling turn of foot on his Olympic horse, Virtual Village Showtime, to win the Christmas Candle Stakes, the main event of the opening performance yesterday.

Skelton, who has been preoccupied with his move "down the road" to a house in the village of Lowsonford, Warwickshire, had also been concerned that Showtime might not have had sufficient preparation for the show. The mare, 13, who Skelton says, has "never been the same" since competing in the Olympic Games in Atlanta last year, suffered a bout of anaemia after her appearance at the Toronto show in Canada in early November. She had been out in the field recuperating until last week when she was brought in and hastily prepared for Olympia.

Her scintillating performance yesterday, however, betrayed no sign of any loss of form. Skelton, the seventh to go, produced a breathtaking round over the nine-fence course to finish in 43.75sec. "She may not be a Dollar Girl or a St James," Skelton said, referring to two of his former top horses, "but she's a trier and can win some useful classes on her day."

Their time was only put in perspective when a succession of top partnerships — including Michael Whitaker on his Brussels Grand Prix winner, Virtual Village Ashley, and Ludger Beerbaum, the European champion from Germany, on Sprehe Rush On, tried and failed to match his time.

Piet Raymakers, of Holland, a member of the gold medal-winning team at the 1992 Olympic Games — and the winner of three Volvo World Cup qualifiers last year — came closest, finishing second in 47.12sec — some [illegible] Skelton. Beerbaum, one of the favourites for the Volvo World Cup qualifier tomorrow, was a close third.

Skelton's win is a timely fillip for the Warwickshire-based rider. In addition to the traumas of moving house he has had a lean year in the sport after the sale of two leading horses — Dollar Girl and Tinka's Boy — in the past 12 months. Having rarely been out of the top ten in the world rankings in recent years, he has now dropped to No 18.

"I always knew I was in for a difficult year after the sale of Tinka's Boy," he said, "but I've got two promising young horses — Giselle and Cartagene — for next year." More immediately, he has to choose between Showtime and Zalza — the horse on which he won the Vink Masters at Olympia last year — for the World Cup qualifier tomorrow. He will make the choice today.

Earlier John Whitaker, who is seeking his first win in the Olympia World Cup qualifier, made a rousing start to the show when he and his daughter, Louise, 17, comfortably won the final of The Petplan Family Pairs Relay. Louise's lightening fast round against the clock on Virtual Village Deep Heat made up the vital time lost when Whitaker, on Virtual Village Randi, overshot the changeover.

In a successful day for the family Michael Whitaker, who paired up with John's son, Robert, 15, was third behind the two Essex-based sisters, Michelle Lipman and Annette Lewis.

RESULTS

CHRISTMAS CANDLE STAKES: 1, Virtual Village Showtime (N Skelton, GB) 0 in 43.75sec; 2, Jewel's Idaam (P Raymakers, Holland) 0 in 47.12; 3, Sprehe Rush On (L Beerbaum, Ger) 0 in 47.27.

THE PETPLAN FAMILY PAIRS RELAY: 1, Virtual Village Deep Heat and Virtual Village Randi (L Whitaker and J Whitaker) 62.70; 2, Inzara and Gold Horizon (M Lipman and A Lewis); 3, Forever Katie and Virtual Village Elton (R and M Whitaker).

SPORT IN BRIEF

Hudson still in intensive care

ALAN HUDSON, the former England football international, was still critically ill in hospital yesterday after being injured in a road accident. His condition remained unchanged and he was continuing to be treated in the intensive care unit, a spokesman at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel said.

The 46-year-old former Chelsea and Arsenal midfield player needed a 14-hour operation to remove a blood clot from his brain after being in an accident with a car near his home in East London on Monday evening. He also suffered internal injuries.

Augusta bound

■ GOLF: Darren Clarke has received an invitation to the Masters next April. It is the first time that Clarke, 29, has been invited to Augusta. "It is a dream come true," Clarke said. The invitation to the first of the year's four major championships is an acknowledgement of his standing in the game. Clarke was fourth in the European money-list, second equal with Jesper Parnevik in the Open and was a member of the victorious Europe Ryder Cup team in September. He is ranked 36th in the world.

Stewart deals

■ MOTOR RACING: Jackie Stewart yesterday unveiled two new sponsorship deals to strengthen the finances of his Formula One team. The telecommunications company, MCI, and the Lear Corporation, one of the world's leading suppliers of automotive interior systems, will support Stewart Grand Prix. Stewart revealed that he has not discounted backing from the tobacco lobby in future, even though his team was one of the few on the grid last season without any form of tobacco backing.

Sampras back

■ TENNIS: Pete Sampras, the world No 1, expects to start practising again this weekend after injuring a calf muscle playing for the United States in the Davis Cup final against Sweden last month. Sampras said yesterday that he expects to play in the Australian Open next month.

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SPORT IN BRIEF

Hudson still in intensive care

RUGBY UNION: DWYER RECRUITS FORMER INTERNATIONAL AS INJURIES BITE DEEP

Leicester banking on Leeds

By Mark Souster

BOB DWYER, the Leicester coach, has turned to a former Australia full back to help the club through its hour of need. Andrew Leeds, who toured Great Britain in 1988 before switching to rugby league, has moved to Welford Road on a temporary two-month contract.

Leeds, 33, won 16 caps for Australia before joining Parramatta and then Western Suburbs, with whom he is still under contract and to whom he will return in February. He also made eight appearances for Wakefield rugby league club in the 1995-96 season.

Leeds, whose wife is English, played for the development team last week and has been picked to play at full back against Harlequins at Welford Road tomorrow.

Although Dwyer has been reluctant to consider stop-gap measures in the past, Leicester's injury problems mean that he has little option and Leeds's experience will help the club through an intensive period in which they play ten Allied Dunbar Premiership first division games. With Leon Lloyd and Tim Barlow injured, Michael Horak moves to the left wing to accommodate Leeds.

The fallout from the heavy defeat by Richmond on Tuesday evening and the injury to Joel Stransky, who has damaged ribs, has been keenly felt. Waisale Serevi plays at fly half, with Austin Healey, who is rekindling his international career on the wing, switched back to scrum half because Jamie Hamilton is also unfit.

At least Dwyer has been able to recall Martin Corry, after his recovery from a neck injury, and Neil Back to the back row. Lewis Moody switches from open-side to blind-side flanker.

For their part, Harlequins have again excluded Will Carling from their 21-man squad. Carling missed the heavy defeat of Wasps because he had not trained last week. He took a full part in training yesterday but, understandably, Andy Keast, the director of rugby, has given a vote of confidence to the team that came out breathing fire after a mid-season break.

With Ireland meeting Italy, Keith Wood and Massimo Cuttita are on international duty, as is Eric Miller, of Leicester, but Wood's deputy, Tom Billups, the American, should be fit. Paul Delaney and Alton Ozdemir have also been included, as has Rob Liley, who moved to The Stoop from Leicester last season. Paul Challinor has been omitted.

Harlequins are one of the few teams for whom Welford Road holds few fears. They have won there five times in the past ten years, the last occasion a controversial 13-12 league win in April. They are running in to form at the right time and a repeat of that performance would do wonders for their hopes of qualifying for Europe again.

Leeds have signed Mateaki Mafi, the Tonga international wing, to strengthen their bid for promotion to the second division of the Premiership. Mafi toured Britain with Tonga this autumn, having played rugby league with Warrington in the summer. Mark Burrow, a lock forward, has also joined from Saracens.

☐ Alan Jones, the father of the injured Wales captain, Gwyn, is holding a press conference this morning at the University Hospital of Wales. He will be joined by some of the medical team that is treating his son, who suffered a severe spinal injury on Saturday. A spokesman described his condition yesterday as "stable and satisfactory" and said that he was showing no ill-effects from his operation.

ALLSPORT

Leeds steps into the breach against Harlequins at Welford Road tomorrow

Geoghegan rues ill fortune

By Mark Souster

THE injuries that have blighted the career of Simon Geoghegan continue to beset him. Two days after he was included in the Bath squad to meet Pau in the semi-finals of the Heineken Cup, Geoghegan, who might have played if Adedayo Adebayo was unfit, has been forced to withdraw because of an adverse reaction to a chronic foot injury.

Geoghegan, 29, trained with Bath on Tuesday and showed no immediate effects after a ninth foot operation. This latest setback, however, must raise doubts over whether he will play again. In three years with Bath, Geoghegan has started 12 games and has played 60 minutes of rugby in the past 18 months.

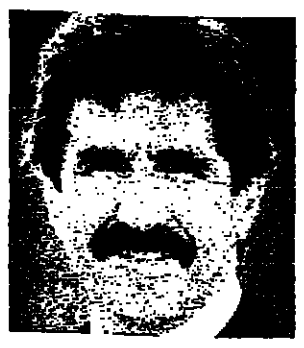
Iain Balshaw, the talented young full back, has been drafted on to the replacements' bench and could play if Adebayo fails a fitness test this morning. The England wing is suffering from back spasms.

The University of Wales, Institute of Cardiff (UWIC), guaranteed themselves a place in the semi-finals of The Times Students European Rugby Championship yesterday with a resounding 84-8 victory over Edinburgh. They scored 14 tries in their third straight victory in pool three.

Gareth Cooper, Gavin Evans, Adrian Evans and Carl Morgan each scored two tries. UWIC, who have a points differential of plus 222, will discover their opponents in the last four when the draw is made in Cork tonight, after the final round of matches in the other pools. Exeter beat The Queen's University of Belfast 19-9 in the remaining pool three game.

England stand to gain from united Europe

GERALD DAVIES



Rugby Union Commentary

After the euphoria of leading his country to an heroic performance against New Zealand, Lawrence Dallaglio said that England must develop according to what is good for England. This is a perfectly reasonable position to take and it would be remiss if he stated otherwise.

However, I would not like to infer from this that he would wish his governing body and his high-powered management team, whose credentials are as honoured and respected as any country would want, to develop the game in an insular fashion with total self-interest as the only motivating factor. Financial considerations should not determine what happens in the short term, nor, in playing terms, what might appear to be in England's immediate best interest. There are those who believe that England have outgrown Europe and that their future lies among the southern hemisphere countries. Along that route await the perils of hubris.

Clearly, rugby in Europe is driven by sectional interests and narrowly selfish concerns. This began with the sleight of hand that characterised the race to sign the television contracts and which caused division among the hierarchy of the unions; it continued when the clubs fell out with those who are meant to govern them, and the game was further destabilised when clubs offered inflated fees to their players, especially in England, and drew players from all corners of the globe. Such a transfer market does not exist among the southern hemisphere countries. Each looks after his own.

I am far from certain that such transfers are ultimately to the benefit of the English game. It may raise the standards of premiership rugby, but to say that it raises the general standard of the game is artificial.

It is now being said, quite seriously, that it is in England's best interest to pursue a fixture policy that ignores the other home countries so that, with France, England will play all the rugby nations of the southern hemisphere in an annual competition. The five nations' championship is no longer a playground fit for the yeomen of England, it seems. The Celtic nations are somehow beneath them.

Not least among the flaws in this proposition is that it would be unwise to draw too many conclusions on the back of a drawn match, however inspiring that game against the All Blacks proved to be.

The International Rugby Board (IRB), one would hope, would wish to develop rugby in a global sense. Rugby is far from being a global sport and the IRB is a long way from exercising a strong global influence and authority. It needs to start flexing its muscles and ought not to support an annual competition that would cast the strongest five countries against each other.

This would do away with the need for a World Cup every four years since, in effect, a world championship would then take place every year. The rugby world would, thereby, contract when it needs to expand. Furthermore, the distribution of finances would suffer. Income from this annual tournament would be shared among the countries in it, who would grow richer, while worldwide, rugby would grow poorer and diminish.

'The Celtic nations are somehow seen to be beneath them'

The World Cup benefits the whole of rugby. Although the challenge for supremacy may be fought out among the few in a World Cup, a share of the revenue finds its way to develop rugby in the emerging countries. Rugby World Cup attempts, through its finances, to widen rugby's appeal, not narrow it. The game needs countries such as Canada, Argentina, Romania and Japan, who have played a part in the international rugby community for quite some time, to make consistent progress. Regrettably, they have only managed to do so intermittently.

So it should be welcomed that Italy, beginning at last to pull together a string of respectable results, will be part of the European championship in the millennium. Expanding the European championship is an essential requirement, not dismissing it and casting it aside. It may be fashionable to refer to the five nations' championship as of second division quality, but it is the only competition we have in the northern hemisphere and, not so long ago, was the envy of the countries below the equator.

England should see their role as promoting this, not relinquishing their part within it. Surely what rugby needs is a strong European championship not a weakened one.

Hubris is a dangerous mood. If the success of the past seven years has encouraged the swagger beginning to emanate from Twickenham, then some might not care to look too closely at the preceding years. The time has come for the European countries to stand together.

The Celtic countries, meanwhile, can hardly be said to be helping. Their intention to create a Celtic Challenge Cup for clubs, districts and provinces merely makes things worse. The objective should be to raise pan-European competition to the level of the Super 12 in the south.

European rugby should look to advance in its entirety, not to subdivide and fragment.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

MEN'S NATIONAL CUP: Semi-final, second leg: Birmingham Bullets 70 Thames Valley Tigers 63 (Thames Valley win 128-125 on aggregate).
EUROPEAN LEAGUE: Group B: Estudiantes Madrid (Sp) 86 Oporto (Por) 63. Group C: Pau-Orthez (Fr) 74 Partizan Belgrade (Yug) 70. Group D: Teamsystem Bologna (It) 77 Olimpia Ljubljana (Slovenia) 61.

CRICKET

Tour match

South Africa Students v England Under-19

PORT ELIZABETH (second day of four): South Africa Students, with ten wickets in hand, are 137 runs ahead

SA STUDENTS: First Innings

D Moffat b Tucker	130
J Henderson b Napier	7
G King run out	78
M Benfield b Powell	4
J Kemp c Wilton b Tucker	18
*G Love b Powell	21
†A Jacobs c Gough b Schofield	32
M Mfobo c Schofield b Powell	2
N Evans not out	3
M Holmes c Haywood b Powell	8
Extras (b 1, lb 5 w 1, nb 7)	14
Total (9 wkts dec)	315

J Albanie did not bat.
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-38, 2-201, 3-209, 4-240, 5-257, 6-291, 7-309, 8-309, 9-315.
BOWLING: Tucker 18-3-61-2; Grove 19-1-85-0; Napier 9-2-18-1; Powell 17.4-6-42-4; Schofield 23-7-61-1; Gough 12-2-35-0; Haywood 3-0-7-0.

ENGLAND UNDER-19: First Innings

*S D Peters c Albanie b Holmes	18
I N Flanagan c Jacobs b Evans	20
M A Gough c Jacobs b Holmes	0
G R Haywood c Moffat b Love	17
G R Napier c Jacobs b Albanie	28
G P Swann b Love	44
J C Powell lbw b Love	1
C P Schofield lbw b Mfobo	34
†N J Wilton b Mfobo	0
J T Tucker not out	10
J O Grove c Jacobs b Holmes	5
Extras (b9 lb3 nb3)	15
Total	192

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-38, 2-38, 3-38, 4-94, 5-94, 6-96, 7-175, 8-175, 9-175.
BOWLING: Holmes 14.4-4-50-3; Evans 15-4-32-1; Love 22-9-53-3; Albanie 10-1-21-1; Mfobo 9-4-24-2.

SA STUDENTS: Second Innings

D Moffat not out	13
J Henderson not out	1
Total (0 wkts)	14

G King, M Benfield, J Kemp, *G Love, †A Jacobs, M Mfobo, M Holmes, N Evans, J Albanie to bat.
BOWLING: Tucker 2-0-10-0; Grove 2-0-4-0.
Umpires: E Scholtz and G Cuddemboy.
WOMEN'S WORLD CUP: Baroda: South Africa 213-8 (L Olivier 51, C Eksteen 48; 50 overs); Denmark 114 (F Madsen 29; 46.2 overs). South Africa won by 99 runs. Gurgaon: Ireland 242-7 (M Grealey 62, C O'Leary 48; 50 overs); Pakistan 60 (C O'Neill 4-10, A Spence 3-4; 30.3 overs). Ireland win by 182 runs.

FOOTBALL

EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP: Qualifying play-off, second leg: England 4 Greece 2 (4-4 on agg; Greece win on away goals).
FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Newcastle United 0 Derby County 0.
FA CUP: Second-round replays: Emley 3 Lincoln City 3 (aet; 2-2 after 90min; Emley win 4-3 on pens); Ilkeston Town 1 Scunthorpe United 2.
FA CUP: Revised third-round draw: Saturday Jan 3: Arsenal v Port Vale; Barnsley v Bolton; Blackburn v Wigan; Bournemouth v Huddersfield; Bristol Rovers v Ipswich; Cardiff v Oldham; Charlton v Nottingham Forest; Cheltenham v Reading; Crewe v Birmingham; Crystal Palace v Scunthorpe; Darlington v Wolverhampton; Derby v Southampton; Grimsby v Norwich; Leeds v Oxford Utd; Leicester v Northampton; Liverpool v Coventry; Manchester City v Bradford; Peterborough v Walsall; Portsmouth v Aston Villa; Preston v Stockport; QPR v Middlesbrough; Rotherham v Sunderland; Sheffield Utd v Bury; Swindon v Stevenage; Watford v Sheffield Wed; West Brom v Stoke; West Ham v Emley. Sunday Jan 4: Chelsea v Manchester Utd; Everton v Newcastle; Wimbledon v Wrexham; Hereford v Tranmere. Monday Jan 5: Tottenham v Fulham.
VAUXHALL CONFERENCE: Spalding Cup: Quarter-final: Gateshead 1 Morecambe 1 (aet; 0-0 after 90min).
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Cup: Third round: Bishop Auckland 1 Belper Town 1; Winsford 1 Lancaster 0.
RYMAN LEAGUE: Full Members Cup: Second round: Leyton Pennant 3 Grays 0.
HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Peterhead 2 Deveronvale 1.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Tranmere 2 Blackburn 3. First division: Bolton 2 Coventry 3. Second division: Burnley 4 Blackpool 2. Third division: Chester 1 Scarborough 1; Wigan 2 Walsall 2.
THE STAR LEINSTER SENIOR CUP: Quarter-final: Monaghan 4 Burren Celtic 0.
MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: O'Brien Butchers premier division Cup: Brache Sparta 6 Potters Bar 0, Letchworth 2 Haringey 2.
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Second-round replays: Brentford 0 Swansea 1; Arsenal 1 Exeter 0; Wimbledon 1 Chelsea 3.
BELGIAN LEAGUE: Royal Antwerp 0 FC Bruges 1.
GERMAN CUP: Quarter-final: Bayern Munich 2 Bayer Leverkusen 0.
SPANISH LEAGUE: Real Sociedad 2 Sporting Gijón 1; Salamanca 2 Tenerife 0; Atlético Madrid 2 Mallorca 3; Español 0 Racing Santander 0; Real Zaragoza 2 Real Madrid 2; Merida 0 Real Valladolid 0; Oviedo 1 Athletic Bilbao 2; Compostela 0 Celta Vigo 0.

RACKETS

QUEEN'S CLUB: Public schools championships: H K Foster Cup: First round: A Titchener-Barrett (Harrow) bt A Hollingsworth (Charterhouse) 15-4, 17-14, 17-14; M Silcock (Radley) bt R Beecroft (Eton) 15-9, 15-0, 9-15, 15-9; O Broom (Radley) bt C Wilson (Harrow) 15-13, 15-11, 15-4. Renny Cup: Second round: T Bomford (Malvern) wo C Bond (Eton); H Paxton (Haileybury) bt M Griffiths-Jones (Wellington) 10-15, 15-6, 16-14; R Cowley (Marlborough) bt J Aylwin (Clifton) 15-6, 15-6; M Stribl (Tonbridge) bt B Pilgrow (Winchester) 16-13, 16-15; A Loudon (Eton) bt J Drayson (Charterhouse) 15-2, 15-8; Thompstone bt W Rogers (Haileybury) 15-3, 15-2; Davis bt Walker 15-10, 15-9; Nash bt Rigg 15-7, 15-7; Rigby bt Hamblin 15-11, 15-12; Bickford bt Windbourne 15-4, 15-7; Bird bt N Wilkinson (Rugby) 15-7, 15-0; J Baker (Malvern) bt N Hutton (Tonbridge) 15-10, 5-15, 17-15; J Stradling (Tonbridge) wo L Fitzwilliams (Harrow); A Andjel (Harrow) bt P Jones (Rugby) 15-11, 15-4; M Chetwood (Marlborough) bt Reed-Herbert 15-0, 15-5; S Cowley (Cheltenham) bt T Bame (Marlborough) 5-15, 15-6, 15-3. Incledon-Webber Cup: Second round: S Uloth (Tonbridge) bt E Shaw (Cheltenham) 15-6, 15-3; G Buck (Clifton) bt E Sheen (Haileybury) 15-12, 15-8; J Konterines (Malvern) bt N Thevathasan (Clifton) 15-0, 15-4; J Aylward (Tonbridge) bt R Tulley (Malvern) 9-15, 15-1, 15-10; O Craven (Harrow) bt J Williams (Winchester) 15-2, 15-4; R Greville-Heygate (Marlborough) bt C Rogers (Haileybury) 15-0, 15-1; Grindy bt J Surrey (Winchester) 15-1, 15-4; D Oldridge (Haileybury) wo Craig.

RUGBY UNION

THE TIMES STUDENTS EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP: Pool four: University College, Cork 23 Bristol University 0.

SKIING

VAL D'ISERE, France: World Cup super giant slalom: Women: 1, K Seizinger (Ger) 1min 07.09sec; 2, R Goetschl (Austria) 1:07.11; 3, H Gerg (Ger) 1:07.64; 4, S Schuster (Austria) 1:07.67; 5, M Dorfmeister (Austria) 1:07.74; 6, I Kostner (It) 1:07.85.

TENNIS

QUEEN'S CLUB: WTA Christmas tournament: A Wainwright (Essex) bt H Parker (Berkshire) 6-0, 6-1; C Smith (Hertfordshire) bt S Gregg (Yorkshire) 7-6, 6-1; J White (Northamptonshire) bt L Naqushbandi (Essex) 6-3, 6-1; J Keane (Warwickshire) bt N Woodhouse (Norfolk) 6-4, 7-5; L Herbert (Hertfordshire) bt D Bell (Surrey) 6-2, 6-2; L Ogan (Warwickshire) bt G Dinham (Surrey) 7-6, 6-4; L Wood (Warwickshire) bt S Turner (Sussex) 6-1, 6-1; J Choudhury (Cambridgeshire) bt L Collinson (Oxfordshire) 6-2, 6-0.

POOLS DIVIDENDS

LITTLEWOODS: Treble chance: 22pts (maximum) £140,264.80, 21 £644.40, 20 £43.15, 19 £7.50. Half-time: £149.00. Four draws: £181.00. Nine homes: £16.40. Five aways (paid on four): £37.50.

FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

Nationwide Football League

Second division

Fulham v Burnley (7.45)
Oldham v Walsall (7.45)
Southend v York (7.45)

Third division

Colchester v Chester (7.45)
Doncaster v Rotherham
Scarborough v Barnet

Vauxhall Conference

Stevenage v Cheltenham (7.45)

FAI HARP LAGER: National League: Premier division: Drogheda Utd v UCD (7.45); St Patrick's Ath v Cork City (7.45); Shelbourne v Finn Harps (7.45).

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Manchester Giants v Crystal Palace (7.30); Thames Valley Tigers v Leopards (8.0); Newcastle Eagles v Watford Royals (7.30).
BOXING (at London Arena, Docklands): WBC super-middleweight championship: R Reid (Runcorn, holder) v T Malinga (SA); WBO light-middleweight: R Wright (US, holder) v A Dodson (Islington); WBO bantamweight: R Regan (Wales, holder) v J Julio (Col); WBO super-featherweight (vacant): B Jones (Cardiff) v W Palacio; WBO strawweight (vacant): M Cantwell (Eltham) v E Jamili (Phi); European bantamweight (vacant): D Francis (Basingstoke) v F Sellier (Fr); British light-middleweight (vacant): E Bingham (Manchester) v N Thurbin (Ilford).
EQUESTRIANISM: Olympia international showjumping championships.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Piste	Conditions Off/p	Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
AUSTRIA								
Kitzbühel	5	90	fair	varied	closed	cloud	1	15/12
(Upper slopes still good, but temperature rising)								
Obergurgl	70	110	good	varied	good	cloud	0	15/12
(Excellent conditions, but high winds)								
FRANCE								
Tignes	40	130	good	heavy	fair	cloud	2	16/12
(Worn patches developing on lowest pistes)								
Val d'Isere	35	60	fair	varied	art	cloud	5	16/12
(Good skiing above 2,200m; man-made snow on home runs)								
SWITZERLAND								
C Montana	5	40	fair	crusty	closed	wind	5	18/12
(Strong winds limiting skiing)								
Klosters	45	105	good	varied	hard	fair	2	14/12
(Good snow above 2,000m; weather deteriorating)								
Verbier	5	100	fair	heavy	closed	cloud	6	14/12
(Top lifts closed by high winds)								
UNITED STATES								
C Butte	65	70	good	varied	fair	sun	14	15/12
(Good skiing on open runs; 11 of 14 lifts open)								

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper; art - artificial.

BOXING

Malinga in mood to test Reid

ROBIN REID, who has made three successful defences of his World Boxing Council super-middleweight championship, faces his toughest test to date at London Arena tonight when Thulane "Sugar Boy" Malinga challenges for his title.

Malinga once held the same belt and, at 36, the South African knows that defeat against the Runcorn boxer will almost certainly mean that his last chance of regaining a world title will have gone.

Malinga outboxed Nigel Benn to secure the title on points in March last year, but controversially lost it to a similar verdict against Vincenzo Nardiello four months later. He then endured months of legal wrangles as he sought another bout with Nardiello, but no sooner had he been installed as the No 1 challenger than Nardiello, who was making a voluntary defence, was beaten by Reid in Italy.

Nick Durandt, Malinga's trainer, said: "In our eyes, 'Sugar Boy' walked away from the Nardiello fight as a winner and he would have had his title back before now if Nardiello hadn't fought and lost to Reid. Reid is a great fighter and an up-and-coming young kid, but he is in with the best super-middleweight in the world."

Reid goes into the contest as one of six British world champions, but by the end of the night he could be joined by three others. Adrian Dodson, Barry Jones and Mickey Cantwell all get their chance on the undercard.

Dodson, 27, from Islington, North London, appears to have the hardest task when he challenges for Ronald Wright's World Boxing Organisation (WBO) light-middleweight title. Dodson has won all 18 of his professional contests, but the American is rated by Mickey Duff, the veteran promoter, as one of the four best boxers in the world.

Cantwell, from Kent, starts as favourite against Eric Jamili, of the Philippines, in his bid for the WBO strawweight title, while Jones, of Cardiff, takes on Wilson Palacia, the Colombian veteran, for the WBO super-featherweight championship.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

The Refresher today is from the English Bridge Union's Youth Training Notes. First, cover up the East-West hands and plan the play.

North: ♠ 4 2 ♥ K Q J 7 ♦ A K 2 ♣ 10 6 5 4

West: ♠ 7 ♥ 9 5 4 3 ♦ Q J 10 8 5 ♣ A Q J

East: ♠ A 8 5 ♥ 10 8 6 2 ♦ 9 7 6 3 ♣ 9 8

South: ♠ K Q J 10 9 6 3 ♥ A ♦ 4 ♣ K 7 3 2

Contract: Five Spades by South — Lead: Queen of diamonds

You have 12 tricks once the ace of spades is knocked out, but cannot get at them. To win the diamond and lead a club would not succeed, even if East had the ace. What can be done?

Cash the second diamond and throw the ace of hearts on it. Now you can cash three hearts discarding clubs and finally play a spade. You make two diamonds, three hearts and six spades, 11 tricks in all.

The English Bridge Union puts great efforts into encouraging young people to play bridge. There is a national network of youth officers who make regular contact with schools and universities.

One new idea is to start beginners on MiniBridge, before going on to knives-on-the-table bridge: MiniBridge concentrates on play and defence rather than bidding. It can be played among children who are still at primary school and sometimes MiniBridge and bridge competitions are held simultaneously.

For a free copy of the booklet All About MiniBridge, contact Gill Pain at the EBU on 01296 394414.

The EBU also produces a newsletter called Young Bridge, edited by Sally Brock, which is produced three times a year and is available free of charge to everyone aged under 25. It is packed full of quizzes, articles, reviews, information, etc. Anyone who would like a copy should contact Gill Pain.

☐ Any youngsters anxious to improve their game should reserve a place at the summer 1998 EBU training camp at Harrow School. Aimed at 15-to-24-year-olds, the camp will run from August 2 to 9, featuring bridge tuition in the morning, recreational activities in the afternoon and a bridge tournament in the evening for the all-inclusive price of £245 per person. Ring Gill Pain on for further details.

☐ *The Times Book of Bridge 1*, a compendium of some of Robert Sheehan's daily columns, is now available in all good bookshops or direct from the publisher, B. T. Batsford, on 01376 321276, price £6.99 (plus £1 postage and packing).

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

Missed chances

Nigel Short, of Britain, is in danger of elimination in the fourth round of the Fide championship at Groningen, Holland.

In a game of extraordinary complications and remarkable material imbalances (against the former Russian grandmaster Alexander Beliavsky, who now represents Slovenia) Short missed his way and crashed to defeat.

Michael Adams, Britain's other remaining representative in the championship, drew his first game against the Russian champion Peter Swidler while favourite Viswanathan Anand dispatched Zoltan Almasi.

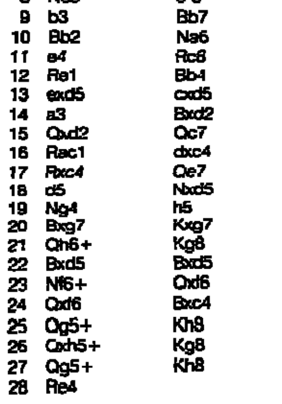
White: Alexander Beliavsky
Black: Nigel Short
Fide world championship
Groningen, December 1997

English Defence

1	d4	e6
2	c4	b6
3	e4	Bb7
4	Bd3	f5
5	exf5	Bb4+
6	Kf1	Nf6
7	Be2	0-0
8	c5	bxc5
9	a3	Ba5
10	dxc5	Nd5
11	Nf3	Rxf5
12	b4	Nxb4
13	axb4	Bxb4
14	Bb2	a5
15	h4	Rd5
16	Qb3	Na6
17	Ne3	Nxc5
18	Qc2	Rf5
19	Rh3	Qe7
20	Kg1	Raf8
21	Rf1	d6
22	Ng5	h6
23	g4	hxg5
24	gxf5	Rxf5
25	Bg4	Rf4
26	f3	gxh4
27	Qh2	Qg5
28	Rxh4	Nd3
29	Rh8+	Kf7
30	Qg3	Qc5+
31	Kh2	Bxe3
32	Qh4	Bf6
33	Qh7	Qc2+
34	Kh3	Rxf3+
35	Bxf3	Nf4+
36	Kg3	Qxb2
37	Qg8+	Kg6
38	Qh7+	Kf7
39	Qg8+	Kg6
40	Qe8+	Kf5
41	Bxb7	g5
42	Rh6	Qc3+
43	Bf3	Ne2+
44	Kg2	Nf4+
45	Kh1	d5
46	Qf7	

Black resigns

Diagram of final position



White: Loek Van Wely
Black: Kiril Georgiev
Fide world championship
Groningen, December 1997

Indian Defence

1	d4	Nf6
2	c4	e6
3	Nf3	b6
4	g3	Ba6
5	Nbd2	c6
6	Bg2	d5
7	0-0	Be7
8	Ne5	0-0
9	b3	Bb7
10	Bb2	Na6
11	e4	Rc8
12	Re1	Bb4
13	exd5	cxd5
14	a3	Bxd2
15	Qxd2	Qc7
16	Rac1	dxc4
17	Rxc4	Qe7
18	d5	Nxd5
19	Ng4	h5
20	Bxg7	Kxg7
21	Qh6+	Kg8
22	Bxd5	Bxd5
23	Nf6+	Qxf6
24	Qxf6	Bxc4
25	Qg5+	Kh8
26	Qxh5+	Kg8
27	Qg5+	Kh8
28	Re4	

Black resigns

☐ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

HELLANDITE
a. To condemn to Hell
b. An Arctic herb
c. A rare ore

MOZZLE
a. Luck
b. To suck through a straw
c. A small portion

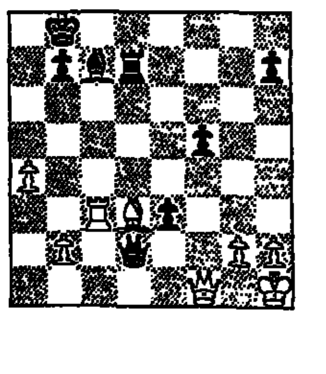
NATATORIUM
a. A fish-bowl
b. A German teaching method
c. A swimming-pool

HEMERA
a. A she mountain-goat
b. A geological period
c. An Alpine shrub

Answers on page 46

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene



Black to play. This position is from the game Howell — Luther, Hastings, 1995. How did Black cash in on his powerful passed pawn?

The 1997-98 event, at the Cinque Ports Hotel, starts on December 29 and lasts until January 7.

Solution on page 46

Seizinger matches Killy with six in a row

ALL the frustrations of the delays in the women's Alpine skiing programme last week were forgotten yesterday when Katja Seizinger, of Germany, won a super giant slalom in Val d'Isère, so equalling one of skiing most venerable records (John Hopkins writes).

*It was in January 1967 that Jean-*Claude Killy won six consecutive races. Seizinger's victory, won by 0.02sec from Renate Goetschl, of Austria, was her sixth in succession since she won a super G in Alberta on November 29. In all, it was the 34th victory of her career. Only Anne-Marie Moser-Proell, with 62, and Vreni Schneider, with 55, have more victories.

Seizinger won two downhill races and another super G, all in Alberta, Canada, as well as the sprint downhill in Val d'Isère on Wednesday.

The French Alpine town is in the heart of a vast skiing area known as *l'espace Killy*. Pictures of the national hero dominate the town, so it was fitting that it should have been there that Seizinger equalled his record.

Picabo Street, making her comeback after injuring her left knee a year ago, was just outside the top ten in the super G, having come tenth in the women's downhill, her speciality, on Wednesday.

It may be difficult for Seizinger to break Killy's record when she competes in a giant slalom today. She faces Debbie Compagnoni, who has had an impressive run of victories herself — seven dating back to last January.

BOXING: VICTORY IN NEW YORK WILL CONFIRM FAITH OF AMERICAN BACKERS

Opportunity beckons Hamed

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT, IN NEW YORK

FEW, if any, in the history of boxing have been given such a chance to make it in America as Naseem Hamed. Every marketing device has been used by his backers, HBO, one of the leading cable television companies in the United States, to promote his name across the country. Even his opponent tonight at Madison Square Garden, Kevin Kelley, is perfectly suited to the purpose of enhancing Hamed's name.

The New Yorker has little chance of beating Hamed. Kelley, 30, has an excellent record on paper — only one defeat in 50 contests — but he is well past his best. However, he still commands enough respect among American boxing fans to ensure that they will recognise a win over their man as a significant victory for Hamed.

Executives of HBO believe that they have a winner in the World Boxing Organisation (WBO) featherweight champion from Sheffield. Seth Abraham, head of HBO, is eagerly looking forward to the performance of a man in whom his company has invested more than $2 million in publicity.

"I don't know how the public is going to respond to this guy," Abraham said. "They may be turned off. Hamed is not humble. He does not know what humility is. When he makes his ring entrance they may boo, they may even throw things. I don't know what will happen, but I can't wait to see it."

Now all that remains is for Hamed to keep his side of the bargain by winning. "There's no way Kevin Kelley can win," he said. "I can put my life on it. I could put everything I own on it. I'm that confident, that positive. I'm blessed with a gift from God. When you are blessed, you have an advantage. You're not going to get beat when you're fighting with a gift. He will go in three."

The confidence of Brendan Ingle, Hamed's trainer, is based on rather more mundane reasons. "He's hitting with tremendous power," Ingle said. "He is coming up to his peak strength. He will be 24 in February. There's a tremendous difference in these last two years from the youngster that won the title. He has matured, he is breaking my and my son Dominic's hands on the pads.

"He had done very hard work over some weeks and had developed a tremendous hook. He has sparred with southpaws because Kelley is a southpaw and has perfected a punch to stop him. It is a blow that travels in an arc over Kelley's right hand. When that lands it will be all over."

It does not take too much of a punch to put Kelley on the canvas. Indeed, he has been down so many times and got up to win that he has developed a reputation for being one of the bravest fighters in the land. However, he has never felt a punch such as Hamed's and it is certain that, if the WBO champion gets in a clean blow, there will be no getting up for Kelley.

Kelley said: "He doesn't realise that my motivation is deeper than his. He is a very rich man. If he gets beat he goes back to England and doesn't have to do anything. That's cool. With me it's a livelihood. I have to pay my water bill next month.

"He is going to find out he ain't just fighting me, he's fighting my will and my soul. When he feels my left hand he is going to say 'eh, this guy's trying to kill me'."

Kelley's chances should not be ruled out. He has an outside chance of causing an upset and experts say he could have one fight still left in him. Technically, he is very talented and he can punch. If he catches Hamed, he could be in serious trouble. That is unlikely to happen, however, as the one most likely to land the first blow is Hamed who, though shorter, is quicker on his feet.

For all of Kelley's fighting talk, one glance at his performance against Alejandro Gonzales in 1995 points to a quick win for Hamed. Gonzales is a lighter puncher than Hamed, yet he had Kelley in trouble from the first round and stopped him in the eleventh. It was noted that Kelley's legs were not what they used to be. Hamed should win inside three rounds as he has predicted.

Hamed: expectations are high in New York

TELEVISION: Live on Sky Box Office (bout scheduled to start at 2.30am).
RADIO: Live coverage on Radio 5 Live (from 10pm).

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 45

HELLANDITE
(c) A hydrous borosilicate of the rare earths and calcium, samples of which also contain aluminium, manganese and iron. An eponym of A. *Helland* (1846-1918) a Norwegian geologist.

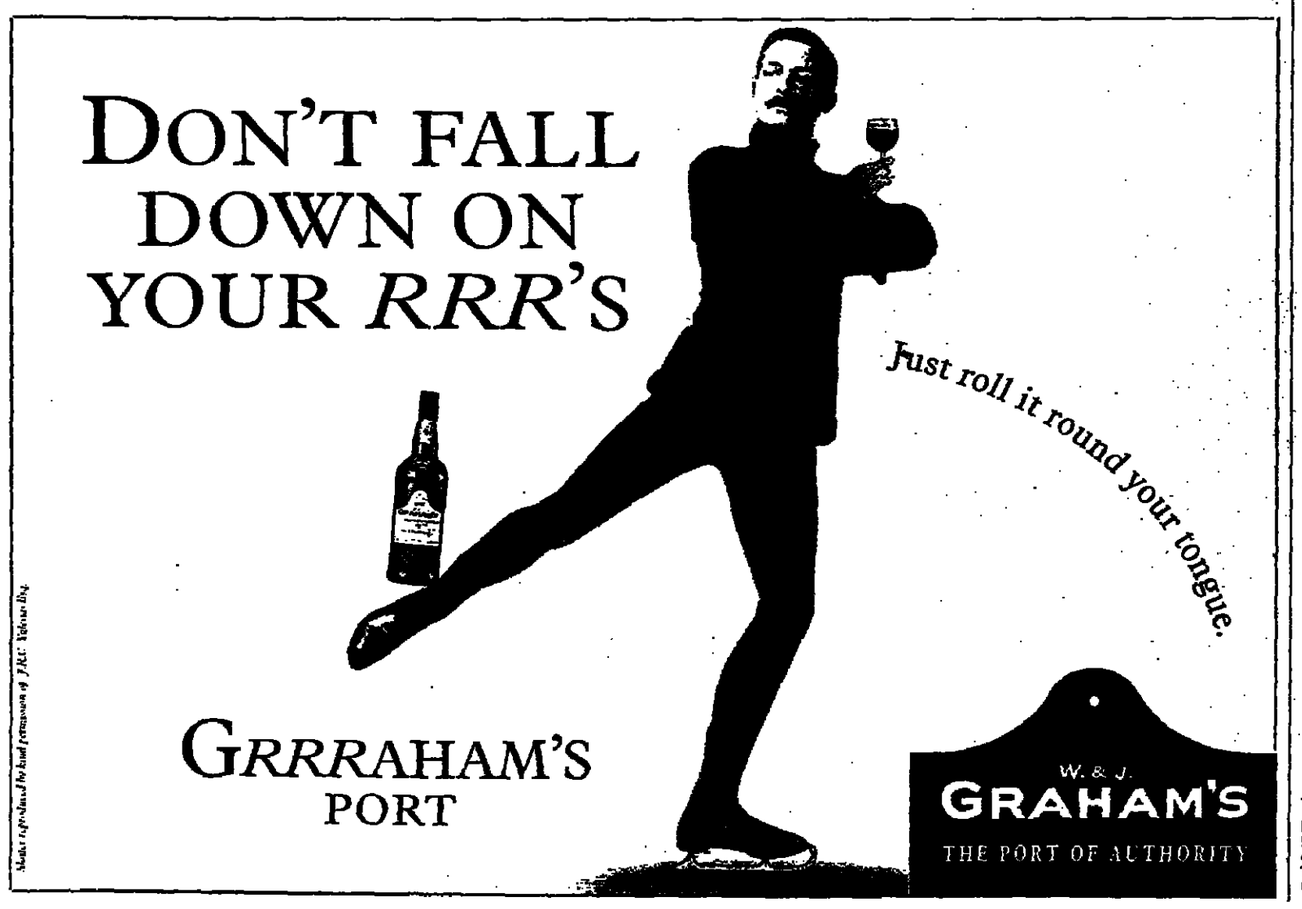
MOZZLE
(a) Luck. Specifically in the phrase *to put the moz on* to inconvenience, to jinx. Also as a transitive verb, *to hinder, interrupt*. An adaptation of the Hebrew *mazzāl* luck. *Cf. shemozzle*.

NATATORIUM
(c) A swimming-pool. The Latin word means "a place for swimming".

HEMERA
(b) A period of geological time in which any particular species was most abundant as represented in strata; an interval between times when two successive species were dominant. The Greek word means a "day". "The range of strata which Mr Richardson has divided into seven or at the most eight hemerae cover, according to my more detailed subdivisions, 32 hemerae, and should afford a good test as to whether this more detailed method of dating makes for greater precision."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. . . . Rxd3!: 2, Rxd3 (2, Qxd3 Qe1+ mating) 2. . . . e2 and wins.



TELEVISION CHOICE

A poisonous reception

999 Lifesavers
BBC1, 8.00pm

Tonight's special edition is about food poisoning, a sombre but necessary topic with Christmas only days away. The high-profile *E.coli* outbreak in Scotland seems to be only the tip of an iceberg for the number of recorded cases has been rising and reached a record 95,000 last year. The programme includes the reconstruction of a wedding that turned out to be a less than happy day when the bride, the groom and some of the guests went down with salmonella poisoning. The incident took place two years ago but some of the victims are still suffering from the after-effects. The culprits were thought to be quiches and chicken still being eaten 14 hours after being put on the table. Also featured is six-year-old Oliver Hind, who contracted *E.coli* food poisoning, and the show offers ten tips on food hygiene.

War Walks: Blitz
BBC2, 8.00pm

The story of the London Blitz has been much told, but trust Richard Holmes's sense of the dramatic to bring it up fresh. After his usual astute scene-setting, which takes in Hitler's decision to scrap his invasion plans and try to bomb Britain into submission, Holmes focuses on one dreadful night, December 29, 1940. This was when St Paul's Cathedral rose proudly above the smoke and flames as much of the City of London was destroyed around it. As for the human dimension, Holmes is able to call up first-hand accounts from firefighters who worked through the night trying to contain what has been called the Second Fire of London. Holmes walks along a street in Camberwell, on one side of which every house was destroyed. The open space that remains is a poignant reminder that the Blitz was a new type of warfare in which civilians were the victims.

Friends/Frasier
Channel 4, 9.00pm and 10.00pm

Two of the Friday sitcom staples end their current runs tonight. The new series of *Frasier* is only a couple of weeks away, but devotees of *Friends* (unless they have Sky) will have to wait until the summer. Both shows bow out in typical style with plots that go round in circles, resolve nothing and are ripe to be resumed the next time around. In *Friends*, Rachel is still jealous of Ross's sexy new girlfriend, Bonnie, and Monica, famous for her unsuitable boyfriends, declares that she is a dying old maid. So there is nothing new there. The gag in *Frasier* is that our hero books a dinner for two and ends up eating alone, thus deepening his angst about being 43 and unattached. Curiously, for it would have made a good line, nobody suggests that what this psychiatrist may need is psychiatry.

Patricia Routledge (BBC1 9.30pm)

Hetty Wainthropp Investigates
BBC1, 9.30pm

"Road rage" makes a topical appearance in the casebook of Patricia Routledge's OAP sleuth, or at least that is what it looks like when a minor car accident results in a bloodied face for a young estate agent (Rebecca Lamb). The perpetrator is not a skinhead with a skinful but the well-dressed wife (Vivien Heilbron) of an unpleasant local industrialist. The puzzle is not whether she did it but why. Typically for this series, we are concerned not with a dark crime but an unhappy family forced to yield its secrets. Meanwhile, young Geoff, appealingly played as always by Dominic Monaghan, becomes a full partner in the Wainthropp Detective Agency. His first thought is to get a car and look forward to high-speed chases. Hetty is quick to disabuse him. She is right. It is not that sort of series. **Peter Waymark**

RADIO CHOICE

Performance on 3: BBC Singers
Radio 3, 7.30pm

The London Baroque Soloists play a weird and wonderful collection of instruments of a type that always seem particularly well-suited to the Christmas season. Baroque instruments also work extremely well with the human voice, so this seasonal concert involving the Soloists and the BBC Singers, sounds attractive as well as appropriate. The two main works being played tonight are from the 17th century: *The Christmas Story* by Schütz is a working of the core Christmas story that uses the chorus as angels and Wise Men. *Messe de Minuet* was originally written by Marc-Antoine Charpentier for midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. The third work tonight features variations on French carols.

A Room for Writing
Radio 4, 10.00am (FM only)

The writer Rumer Godden will be 90 years old soon and Radio 4 has been noting that landmark with some programmes this week and next. Today Godden talks about the locations for some of her stories, meaning where she wrote them rather than where they were set. Given the somewhat nomadic nature of Godden's life, these locations have tended to be varied and exotic. She wrote *Black Narcissus* on a ship and her other writing studios have included houses in the Himalayas and Buckinghamshire and a house in Rye which once belonged to Henry James. She now lives and writes in Dumfriesshire. The programme is interspersed with readings from Godden's work and extracts from letters to friends and family. **Peter Barnard**

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Greening and Zoé Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Jo Whiley. Includes **12.30pm** Newsbeat **2.00** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Dave Pearce **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Pete Tong: Essential Selection **9.00** Judge Jules **11.00** Westwood: Radio 1 Rap Show **2.00am** One in the Jungle **4.00** Charlie Jordan

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **11.30** Jimmy Young **1.30pm** Debbie Thrower **3.00** Ed Stewart **5.05** John Dunn **7.00** Hubert Gregg **7.30** Friday Night is Music Night **9.15** Dracula. Hywel Bennett reads Bram Stoker's classic **9.30** Listen to the Band **10.00** The Arts Programme with Sheridan Morley **12.05am** Charles Nove **4.00** Diana Louise Jordan

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme **9.00** David Mellor **12.00** Midday with Mair **2.00pm** Ruscoe on Five **4.00** Nationwide **7.00** News Extra **7.30** Alan Green's Sportstalk **8.30** Friday Match. Coverage of Fulham v Burnley in Division Two **10.00** Fight Night. World Championship boxing from London and New York **3.00am** Up All Night **5.00** Morning Reports

VIRGIN RADIO

5.00am Jeremy Clark **7.00** Lynn Parsons **10.00 (FM)** Robin Banks **(AM)** Graham Dene **1.00pm (FM)** Nick Abbot **(MW)** Nicky Horne **4.00** Russ 'n' Jono **7.00 (FM)** Paul Coyte **(AM)** Caimin Jones **10.00** Mark Forrest **2.00am** Richard Porter

TALK RADIO

6.30am Bill Overton and Carol McGiffin **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00** Lorraine Kelly **2.00pm** Tommy Boyd **4.00** Peter Deeley **7.00** Moz Dee's Sportszone **10.00** Mike Allen **1.00am** Mike Dickin

WORLD SERVICE

6.00am Newsday **6.15** Europe Today **7.00** News **7.15** Off the Shelf **7.30** Music Review **8.00** News **8.10** Pause for Thought **8.15** Westway **8.30** John Peel **9.00** News; News in German (648 only) **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Children in Conversation **9.30** BBC English: Speaking of English **9.45** Sports Roundup **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Assignment **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Focus on Faith **12.00** News **12.05pm** World Business Report **12.15** Britain Today **12.30** Founders of their Faith **12.45** Sports Roundup **1.00** Newshour **2.00** News **2.05** Outlook **2.30** Multitrack: Alternative **3.00** News; News in German (648 only) **3.05** Football Extra **3.15** Journey to the Centre of the Atom **3.30** Science in Action **4.00** News **4.15** The New Europe **4.30** The World Today; News in German (648 only) **4.49** Britain Today **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Roundup **6.00** Newsdesk **6.30** Focus on Faith; News in German (648 only) **7.00** News **7.01** Outlook **7.25** Pause for Thought **7.30** Multitrack: Alternative **8.00** Newshour **9.00** News **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Britain Today **9.30** People and Politics **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** The World Today **10.45** Sports Roundup **11.00** News **11.05** Outlook **11.30** Multitrack: Alternative **12.00** Newsdesk **12.30am** From the Weeklies **12.45** Britain Today **1.00** Newsdesk **1.30** Just a Minute **2.00** Newsday **2.30** People and Politics **3.00** News **3.05** World Business Report **3.15** Sports Roundup **3.30** Science in Action **4.00** Newsdesk **4.30** The World Today **4.45** Off the Shelf

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Alan Nann with Trumpet Alarm Call and Breakfast Baroque **9.00** Henry Kelly. Michael Barry's Classic Recipe is for the ultimate chocolate cake. Plus, Classic Masterpiece and Kelly's Club Sandwich **1.00pm** Listener Request Hour. Presented by Jane Jones **2.00** Concerto. Paganini (Violin Concerto No 1 in D) **3.00** Jamie Crick **6.30** Newsnight **7.00** Smooth Classic at Seven with John Brunning **8.00** Evening Concert. Bernstein (Chichester Psalms); David Fanshawe (Dona Nobis Pacem, African Sanctus) **10.00** Michael Moppin. Includes at **11.35** Nocturne **2.00am** Concerto (r) **4.00** Sally Peterson

RADIO 3

6.00am Ora Air, with Stephanie Hughes, including Delibes (Suite, Le Roi S'Amuse); Brahms (Rhapsody in B minor); Mahler (Des Knaben Wunderhorn, excerpts); Locatelli (Concerto Grosso in F); Bernstein (I Feel Pretty, West Side Story); Berlioz (Overture Le Corsaire)
9.00 Morning Collection, with Peter Hobday. Vivaldi (Violin Concerto in E flat, La Tempesta di Mare); Butterworth (Two English Idylls); Mozart (String Quintet in G minor)
10.00 Musical Encounters, with Mary Miller. Includes Debussy (String Quartet in G minor); Schubert (Impromptu in C minor); Tchaikovsky (Es Geht auf Mitternacht, The Queen of Spades); Vivaldi (Viola d'Amore Concerto in A); Beethoven (Fantasy in C for piano, chorus and orchestra); Abramson (Soldier)
12.00 Composer of the Week: Prokofiev
1.00pm Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. From Studio 7 in Manchester. Peter Hill, piano. Schoenberg (Five Pieces); Douglas Young (Herr Schoenberg Plays Ping-Pong, first broadcast); Messiaen (Le Courlis Cendré, Catalogue d'Oiseaux)
2.00 The BBC Archive. Brian Kay introduces some of the many recordings by the choir of King's College, Cambridge, founded in 1448 by Henry VI. Includes carols sung at the celebrated the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. Howells (Collegium Regale, excerpts); Darke (In the Bleak Midwinter); Ord (Adam Lay Ybounden); Willcocks (Sussex Carol); Dupre (Le Tombeau de Titelouze, excerpts); Handel (Violin Concerto in B flat, Sonata à 5); Britten (Ceremony of Carols)
4.00 Music Restored. Highlights of a concert given last month in the Wigmore Hall, London, by the Harp Consort, director Andrew Lawrence-King. Includes music from Lucas Ruiz de Ribayaz's dance collection of 1677
4.45 Music Machine, with Tommy Pearson
5.00 In Tune, with Sean Rafferty. A special edition, including live performances from emerging British performers
7.30 Performance on 3. Live from St Giles's Church, Cripplegate, London. See Choice. With the BBC Singers, Stephen Farr, organ, London Baroque Soloists under Stephen Cleobury, Neil MacKenzie, tenor, Margaret Feaviour, soprano, Schütz (The Christmas Story) **8.15** Joyeux Noels **8.35** Daquin (Noel Suisse); Balbastre (Noel Etranger); Dandrieu (Noel en Duo); Daquin (Noel pour les Grands Jeux); Charpentier (Messe de Minuit)
9.35 Role Play. Michael Billington talks to Simon Russell Beale and David Troughton about *Richard III* (4/4) (r)
10.00 Hear and Now: Hugh Wood at 65 (Sounding the Century). Sarah Walker talks to Hugh Wood and introduces performances of his music in a concert given last month in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford
11.30 Composer of the Week: Goehr (r)
12.30am Kenton's Innovations. Max Harrison profiles the American pianist and composer Stan Kenton (2/4) (r)
1.00 Through the Night, with Donald MacLeod

RADIO 4

5.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00 News Briefing **6.10** Farming Today **6.25** Prayer for the Day **6.30** Today **8.40** Yesterday in Parliament **8.58** Weather
9.00 News 9.05 Desert Island Discs. Sue Lawley's castaway is the chairman of Northern Foods, Chris Haskins (r)
9.45 Feedback. The last of the current series presented by Chris Dunkley
10.00 (LW) News; An Act of Worship
10.00 (FM) News; A Room for Writing. See Choice
10.15 (LW) On This Day, with Geoffrey Wheeler
10.30 Woman's Hour. Introduced by Margaret Gilmore
11.30 The Natural History Programme. Julian Hector explores the world's richest coral reefs off the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, and explores the threats to their future survival
12.00 News; You and Yours. Consumer news and current affairs with Mark Whittaker
12.25pm The Food Programme. Derek Cooper meets some of the people who make a traditional Christmas dinner possible **12.55** Weather
1.00 The World at One
1.40 The Archers (r) **1.55** Shipping Forecast
2.00 News; Classic Serial: War and Peace. A dramatisation of Tolstoy's epic novel (5/10) (r)
3.00 News; The Afternoon Shift, with Laurie Taylor and guests
4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope. Tim Marlow reviews the premiere of Stephen Sondheim's *Saturday Night*. Plus recommendations for some of the best art books of the year
4.45 Short Story: A Festive Vocation, by Eddie McVeigh, read by B.J. Hogg (r)
5.00 PM, with Chris Lowe and Nigel Wrench **5.50** Shipping Forecast **5.55** Weather
6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 Going Places. David Stafford presents a seasonal ideas for things to do this weekend
7.00 News 7.05 The Archers
7.20 Pick of the Week. Presented by Chris Serle
8.05 Any Questions? Jonathan Dimbleby is joined in Market Rasen, Lincolnshire, by panellists including the writer Melba Wilson
8.50 Law in Action, with Marcel Berlins. Includes a look at the media's reaction towards the proposed privacy laws
9.15 Letter from America. Another slice of life Stateside served up by Alistair Cooke
9.30 Kaleidoscope Feature: Reversioning. Nigel Floyd and Mark Kermode look at the phenomenon of reversioning in film adaptations of books (r)
10.00 The World Tonight, with Robin Lustig
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Special Terms. Written by Ronald Frame (2/2)
11.00 Week Ending. The last in the current series of satirical observation with Sally Grace, Jon Glover, Dave Lamb and Sarah Parkinson
11.25 Fourth Column. A sideways look at the week
11.45 Today in Parliament. A roundup of the day's events in Westminster
12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: Conversations with My Agent, by Rob Long (5/5)
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2:** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089.
Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

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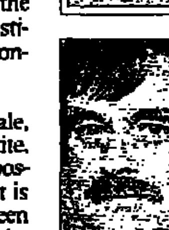
Asking previously unthinkable questions

REVIEW



Peter Barnard

Television has been very well served by the environmental lobby over the past 20 years. All that videotape, courtesy of every agency from the BBC Natural History Unit to Greenpeace. All those stunning images, of everything from whales to oil slicks, stricken birds to smouldering rainforests. There had to be a day of reckoning and that day has come.

Come and gone. Two series, **Scare Stories** on BBC2 and *Against Nature* on Channel 4, have been revisiting environmental issues from a perspective less liberal, or less alarmist (choose your word), than the one with which we are familiar. Both series have just finished, so perhaps television will now return to the familiar ground of shedding video tears for our planet. If so, it leaves some important questions hanging in the air.

Last night *Scare Stories* ended with *Sinking the Ark*, which asked whether mankind had not bent too far backwards in the direction of species protection. The programme served the useful function of explaining how massive publicity coups had elevated animals to a status seemingly higher than that of mere people, but of course a cause is not flawed just because it enjoys slick publicity.

The programme was excellent while it was focusing on the issue of the whale, not quite so coherent when it tried to reinforce the point using several other creatures. The whale and its alleged saving by campaigners offers an object lesson in the manipulation of human emotions and there is no better example of the absurdities that some in the environment lobby have perpetrated.

Roger Payne, a marine biologist, discovered in the 1960s that whales could sing. As a result: "Suddenly one day I decided that I would spend the rest of my life trying to do something to improve the way people look at whales." Payne has been as good as his word. But if the ability to sing automatically justified protected status, Des O'Connor would be grade one listed.

Beyond question, the whale, with its enormous appetite, *occupies an important position* in the food chain. But that is not why governments have been lobbied, not to say terrorised, by advocates of saving the whale (in some waters, they are threatened by over-population). The media, and not just television, put the whale on the fashion map by showing its great dignified torso and playing its haunting tunes. The food chain had nothing to do with it.

Similarly, as the programme showed, campaigns to save the tiger have skirted round the unfortunate fact that tigers eat people. When large areas of India and Africa were turned into reservations and the hunting of tigers was banned, the increasing population of tigers killed the cattle of farmers whose tribes had occupied the land for a thousand years. But nobody launched Save the African Farmer with a gala *dinner at the Dorchester*. Instead, the programme reported, one million people were forced to up sticks and move somewhere else so that the protected tiger could roam (and cash-rich tourists could continue to safari).

In the West, people have more prosaic but equally important questions to resolve, such as: will my doctor do me any good? **Natural Born Healers** (Channel 4) is an interesting series about alternative medicine. Unlike alter*native comedy, we can define what* it is an alternative to: it is an alternative to having a GP examine you and write a prescription. Last night the series took Roy Haggerty, a sufferer for three years from chronic fatigue syndrome, or ME, and sent him to Dr Julian Kenyan, a practitioner of complementary medicine, for a three-month course of treatment. By the end of it Roy seemed better and was able to mow his lawn, *whereas before he became tired at* the sight of the lawnmower.

Roy's GP, Dr Peter May, was not very impressed when this course of action began and his view did not appear to have changed when it ended: "So (Kenyan) is putting out wacky ideas, completely out of the blue and if he (Haggerty) gets better (Kenyan) will say they've got some basis in reality. Bizarre."

The real difference in approach is that Kenyan uses imagination in choosing a treatment whereas a GP's training is to treat demonstrable symptoms on a scientific basis. I would not presume to choose between these approaches, but if something works then it must be a legitimate treatment, even if nobody can properly explain why the treatment works.

Now that winter has finally arrived flies-on-the-wall are dying off. The latest to *go the way of all such documentaries* is **Dover** (ITV) which has been a fly on the wall of our busiest port these past few weeks. I missed the earlier episodes but if last night's finale sums up the whole I can only say that it is surprising how difficult it can be to stay awake for 30 minutes.

The arrival of a cruise liner which had to disgorge 2,400 passengers and sail again 13 hours later with a new passenger complement might have offered rich pickings to the cameras, but all we got was a few passengers playing hunt-the-suitcase. There was also a poignant segment filmed on the day of the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales as the port organised, with great efficiency and tact, the observing of the national one-minute silence.

Perhaps that cast a pall over the whole programme. Certainly there was little excitement to be had from the only other incident: customs men opening two china elephants to find cannabis hidden inside. That had the appearance of being filmed by an earlier fly on a different wall.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (46819)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (41277)
9.00 Good Living Last in series (1096722)
9.25 Style Challenge Two children bound for Lapland (1082529)
9.50 Kilroy (T) (2720819)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (1427884)
10.55 The Really Useful Show (T) (8599258)
11.35 Change That Transforming the furniture of celebrity guests June Whitfield, John Leslie and Anna Walker (3715109)
12.00 News (T) and weather (9239616)
12.05pm Call My Bluff (2440109)
12.35 Give Us A Clue Last in series (5040797)
1.00 News (T) and weather (44364)
1.30 Regional News (17282838)
1.40 The Weather Show (86013797)
1.45 Neighbours (T) (13681172)
2.10 Petrocelli (r) (1711242)
3.00 Vets in Practice Trude discovers she has achieved celebrity status (r) (T) (4971)
3.30 Playdays (7549906) **3.50** Dear Mr Barker (2689797) **4.05** The All New Popeye Show (2945068) **4.10** Casper (3154722) **4.35** Record Breakers Last in series (2421432) **5.00** Newsround (T) (3030187) **5.10** Blue Peter (T) (6065155)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (315703)
6.00 News (T) and weather (426)
6.30 Regional News (906)
7.00 Weekend Watchdog with Anne Robinson (T) (2180)
7.30 Top of the Pops (T) (890)
8.00 CHOICE **999 Lifesavers: Food Safety** Reconstructions of a couple's wedding celebrations ruined by a salmonella outbreak, and a seven-year-old boy struck down with *E.coli* food poisoning (T) (5600)
8.30 Only Fools and Horses The Trotter brothers attempt to help a German damsel in distress (r) (T) (7635)
9.00 News (T) and weather (6987)
9.30 CHOICE **Hetty Wainthropp Investigates: Fisticuffs** Lancashire's answer to Miss Marple dons her best tweed outfit and attempts to help a "road rage" victim (T) (283345)
10.25 Escape from Alcatraz (1979) FILM Clint Eastwood stars in this drama based on the true story of a convict's attempt to break out of the notorious high-security prison on Alcatraz Island. Directed by Don Siegel (245616) **WALES: 10.25** For One Night Only: West End star Ria Jones performs a selection of showstoppers. Last in series (325797) **10.55** FILM: Escape from Alcatraz (27662600) **12.40am** FILM Jinxed! (973265) **2.15** News headlines and weather (8508038) **2.20** BBC News 24
12.10am Jinxed! (1982) FILM Comedy, with Bette Midler. A blackjack dealer sets about seducing the girlfriend of a customer who's on a seemingly never-ending winning streak, in an attempt to break his lucky run. Directed by Don Siegel (T) (933407)
1.45 Weather (7057117)
1.50 BBC News 24

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BBC2

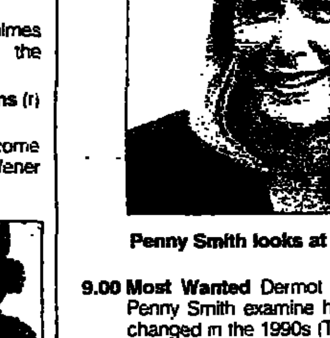
6.00am Social Sciences: Global Media (37161)
7.00 See Hear Breakfast News (T) (3015906)
7.15 Teletubbies (r) (2202906) **7.40** Yakky Duck (r) (8662567) **8.05** Smart (r) (T) (6784884) **8.30** William's Wish Wellingtons (r) (2837987) **8.35** Wishing (9797155) **8.45** The Record (5195664) **9.10** The Fugitive (r) (T) (1662906) **10.00** Teletubbies (29567)
10.30 A Day at the Races (1937, b/w) FILM Marx Brothers comedy set in a sanatorium. Directed by Sam Wood (19583548)
12.15pm Wear It Well (r) (8043074) **12.30** Working Lunch (22513) **1.00** The Little Polar Bear (33799180) **1.05** Pingu (r) (33798451) **1.10** Hammer it Home (73374513) **1.30** A River Somewhere: Fly-fishing on Los Roques island, Venezuela (21884) **2.00** Take a Meal: Spain's Rioja region (92529722) **2.15** Going, Going, Gone (45922567) **2.40** News (T) **2.45** Oldie TV (r) (5735703) **3.25** News (T) **3.30** The Village (884)
4.00 Ready Steady Cook (819) **4.30** Through the Keyhole (2420703) **4.55** Esther (5816529) **5.30** Today's the Day (155)
6.00 The Simpsons Homer becomes a department store Santa Claus (T) (187345)
6.20 Star Trek (r) (T) (802451)
7.15 Electric Circus (547221)
7.30 Earth and Life: Science of Climate Evidence discovered in the Antarctic and under the ocean suggests that climate changes have been going on for *thousands of years without any threat to* life on Earth. Are worries about global warming unfounded? Last in series (T) (432)
8.00 CHOICE **War Walks II** Richard Holmes revisits London during the Blitz of December 1940 (T) (3242)
8.30 Geoff Hamilton's Paradise Gardens (r) (T) (5277)
9.00 Shooting Stars Vic and Bob welcome Vanessa Feltz, Fred Talbot, Louise Wener and Mark Williams (r) (T) (4529)

Panto — ***Fast Show* style (9.30pm)**

9.30 The Fast Show Comedy with Paul Whitehouse, Charlie Higson and Caroline Aherne (T) (15277)
10.00 Have I Got News for You Last in the series of the satirical quiz (96600)
10.30 Newsnight (T) (660345)
11.15 The A Force Roy Diamond and Patti Boulaye introduce the best in black entertainment (410093)
12.50am The Trial (1962) FILM Orson Welles's Kafka adaptation about an anonymous man arrested by a mysterious authority and put on trial for an offence he knows nothing about. With Anthony Perkins and Jeanne Moreau (443469)
2.40 Weather (3208662)

HTV

6.00am GMTV (2581180)
9.25 Supermarket Sweep (T) (1091277)
9.55 Regional News (T) (7844819)
10.00 The Time, the Place (16093)
10.30 This Morning (T) (97336109)
12.20 pm Regional News (T) (9243819)
12.30 News (T) and weather (5132722)
12.55 The Fashion Police (T) (5044513) **1.25** Home and Away (T) (73453074) **1.50** Murder, She Wrote: A Christmas Gift (r) (9829180) **2.40** Dr Quinn, Medicine Woman (T) (5730258)
3.20 News (T) (3373557)
3.25 Regional News (T) (1868708)
3.30 Jays' World (2976277) **3.40** Titch (8015819) **3.50** CITV Awards 1997 (1773432) *5.10 Caring at Christmas* (T) (9101093)
5.40 News (T) and weather (598109)
6.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (993726)
6.25 Regional Weather (T) (345432)
6.30 Regional News (T) (154)
7.00 Bruce's Price Is Right (T) (4548)
7.30 Coronation Street Judy is desperate to get Katie back (T) (258)
8.00 The Bill The money from a robbery six years ago has never been found. Can the thief's grandson help Beech and Carver *to discover its whereabouts?* (T) (7068)
8.30 Blind Men The sales team is facing redundancies (T) (2703)



Penny Smith looks at policing (9pm)

9.00 Most Wanted Dermot Murnaghan and Penny Smith examine how policing has changed in the 1990s (T) (7154)
10.00 News (T) and weather (90426)
10.30 Regional News (971513)
10.40 Shattered Dreams (1990) FILM with Lindsay Wagner and Michael Nouri. Fact-based drama about a woman who suffers mental and physical abuse from her husband, a senior law official. Directed by Robert Iscove (83172635)
12.30am Loverboy (1989) FILM with Patrick Dempsey and Kate Jackson. Comedy about a college boy who is left to fend for himself in the real world when his parents refuse to pay his course fees. When he takes a job delivering pizzas, he suddenly finds himself much in demand by the bored *housewives on his route*. Directed by Joan Micklin Silver (450759)
2.20 Between the Darkness and the Dawn (1985) FILM starring Elizabeth Montgomery and James Naughton. Drama about a woman who wakes from a 20 year coma to find that her high-school sweetheart has married her sister. Directed by Peter Levin (863556)
4.05 Collins and Maconie's Movie Club (r) (58111681)
4.35 Coach (79850556)
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (48662)
5.30 ITN News

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (5044513)
2.50-3.20 Our House (4854109)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (9101093)
6.25-7.00 Central News (690703)
10.40 Film: Innocent Blood (86130345)
12.40am Film: Too Good to Be True (733594)
2.20 The LADS (5217662)
2.55 Box Office America (1681049)
3.20 Central Jobfinder '97 (254204)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
12.55 Home and Away (5044513)
1.25 Wild About Devon (99034677)
1.55 Westcountry Update (62673724)
2.25-3.20 Blue Heelers (1898345)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (9101093)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (80278)
12.30am Film: Loverboy (450759)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except:
12.55pm-1.25 Shortland Street (5044513)
1.50 Perfectly Pets (28217113)
2.20-3.20 Highway to Heaven (8650155)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (9101093)
6.00-7.00 Meridian Tonight (80278)
12.30am Film: Loverboy (450759)

ANGLIA

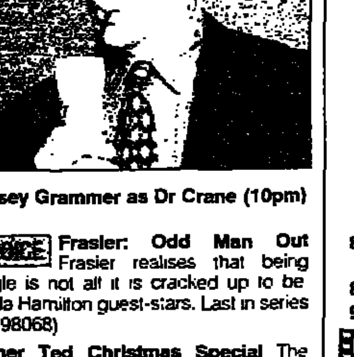
As HTV West except:
12.55pm-1.25 What's My Line? (5044513)
1.50 Backstage (28217113)
2.20-3.20 Highway to Heaven (8650155)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (9101093)
6.25-7.00 Anglia News (690703)
12.30am Film: Loverboy (450759)

S4C

Starts: 7.00 The Big Breakfast (34987)
9.00 Something So Right (4936529)
9.55 Film: Irish Eyes are Smiling (1944) starring Monty Woolley, Dick Haymes and June Haver (41668113)
11.30 Sophie's Meat Course (3890)
12.00 Sesame Street (93567)
12.30pm Ricki Lake (20109)
1.00 Slot Meithrin (50396074)
1.15 Slot Syniadau Sali (50391529)
1.30 Film: The Moonraker (1958) starring George Baker and Sylvia Sims (45074)
3.00 Movers and Shakers (8839)
3.30 Fifteen-to-One: Champion of Champions (6597451)
4.15 Deals on Wheels (729451)
4.45 5 Pump (728722)
5.15 Countdown: Grand Final (1793190)
6.00 Newyddion (468722)
6.10 Heno (959682)
7.00 Pobol y Cwm (663155)
7.25 Y Clwb Rygbi (711180)
8.00 Cefn Gwlad (1838)
8.30 Newyddion (8695)
9.00 Pawb a'i Farn (8616)
10.00 Brookside (976258)
10.35 Friends (594567)
11.05 Father Ted Christmas Special (124703)
12.15am Crapston Villas (7256038)
12.30 TFI Friday (2542653)
1.35 Film: Up the Chastity Belt (875730)

CHANNEL 4

5.55am Sesame Street (39529)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (34987)
9.00 Something So Right (4936529)
9.55 Irish Eyes are Smiling (1944) FILM with Monty Woolley, Dick Haymes and June Haver. A celebration of the work of Ernest R. Ball, the Irishman from Cleveland who wrote sentimental ballads. Directed by Gregory Ratoff (41668113)
11.30 Sophie's Meat Course Game (6/6) (r) (T) (3890) **12.00** Sesame Street (93567) **12.30pm** Light Lunch (r) (6178277) **1.35** Augusta's Guests. Animation (86105722)
1.40 Where Do We Go from Here? (1945) FILM with Fred MacMurray. A musical comedy about a would-be GI who is transported back in time by an inept genie. Directed by Gregory Ratoff (8194109)
3.00 Garden Doctors (r) (8839) **3.30** Fifteen-to-One: Champion of Champions (T) (6597451) **4.15** Countdown, Grand Final (T) (7875797) **4.55** Ricki Lake Christmas makeovers (T) (5738797) **5.30** Pet Rescue (T) (451)
6.00 TFI Friday Among the guests is Dale Winton (25600)
7.00 Channel 4 News (T) (819161)
7.55 The Political Slot (265277)
8.00 The Best of Collectors' Lot (T) (1838)
8.30 Brookside Will Max go along with Jacqui's new proposition? (T) (8695)
9.00 CHOICE **Friends: The One at the Beach** When the friends stay at a beach house, Rachel becomes jealous of Ross's uninhibited girlfriend. Teri Garr makes a guest appearance. Last in series (T) (719635)
9.35 Ellen: Looking Out for Number One Ellen takes advice from a therapist to become more assertive (T) (524451)



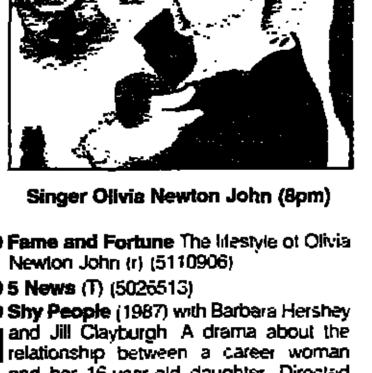
Kelsey Grammer as Dr Crane (10pm)

10.00 CHOICE **Frasier: Odd Man Out** Frasier realises that being single is not all it is cracked up to be. Linda Hamilton guest-stars. Last in series (T) (98068)
10.30 Father Ted Christmas Special The comic clerics become lost in a large store and end up in the lingerie department (r) (T) (8850567)
11.40 Crapston Villas Adult animation (7/10) *(T) (912635)*
11.55 TFI Friday (r) (562109)
1.00am Up the Chastity Belt (1971) FILM A Middle Ages romp starring Frankie Howerd in the dual roles of the lowly Lurkalot and Richard the Lionheart. Directed by Bob Kellet (T) (731662)
2.40 Springhill (5954335)
3.45 The King Steps Out (1936, b/w). FILM A vintage romantic operetta starring Grace Moore, Frieda Inescourt and Franchot Tone. Directed by Josef von Sternberg (201402)
5.15 Desire (r) (T) (96778)

CHANNEL 5

CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite. *Viewers with a* **Videocrypt** *decoder will* be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 63 are picture: **10.92075 GHz**; sound: **7.02** and **7.20 MHz**

6.00am 5 News Early (4296567)
7.30 Milkshake! (7403426) **7.35** Adventures of the Bush Patrol (r) (9168819) **8.00** Havakazoo (r) (1801613)
8.30 WideWorld: Fragile Planet How sandy beaches are constantly changing (6/10) (2251154)
9.00 Espresso Consumer affairs (7030819) **10.00** Exclusive (r) (4495258) **10.30** Was It Good for You? (r) (8851398)
11.00 Leeza (3307180) **11.50** Double Espresso (90963451) **12.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (T) (8651190) **12.30pm** Family Affairs (r) (T) (1596616)
1.00 5 News Update (88838906) **1.05** Sunset Beach (T) (4189838) **2.00** 5's Company (3384616)
3.30 Bordertown Cafe (1991) FILM starring Susan Hogan, Janet Wright and Lora Schroeder. A sentimental comedy drama following the ups and downs of parental and *romantic love across three generations of* a large family. Directed by Norman Bailey (4194155)
5.30 Whittle Audience participation quiz (T) (4745180)
6.00 100 Per Cent (4742093)
6.30 Family Affairs Charlotte and Liam are reunited with their parents (T) (4733345)
7.00 Name That Tune (5101258)
7.30 Exclusive (4739529)



Singer Olivia Newton John (8pm)

8.00 Fame and Fortune The lifestyle of Olivia Newton John (r) (5110906)
8.30 5 News (T) (5026513)
9.00 Shy People (1987) FILM with Barbara Hershey and Jill Clayburgh. A drama about the relationship between a career woman and her 16-year-old daughter. Directed by Andrei Konchalovsky (10446616)
11.15 La Femme Nikita Adventures of a lethal female secret agent (3533971)
12.10am *Lexx: The Dark Zone Stories* *Sci-fi* dramas (9448730)
2.00 Family Sins (1987) FILM starring James Farentino and Jill Eikenberry. A drama that goes under the surface of a supposedly happy family life. Directed by Jerrold Freeman (1940486)
3.40 The Cimarron Kid (1951) A western adventure starring Audie Murphy and Beverly Tyler, directed by Bud Boetticher (52897310)
5.05 Night Stand Spoof chat show (67098020)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (7915556)

SATELLITE AND CABLE

● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY 1

6.00am Morning Glory [illegible] **9.00** [illegible] **10.00** Another World [illegible] **11.00** [illegible] **12.00** [illegible] **1.00pm** [illegible] **2.00** [illegible] **3.00** [illegible] **4.00** [illegible] **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager [illegible] **6.00** [illegible] **6.30** Married... with Children [illegible] **7.00** The Simpsons [illegible] **7.30** [illegible] **8.00** Highlander: The Series [illegible] **9.00** Walker, Texas Ranger [illegible] **11.00** Star Trek: Voyager [illegible] **12.00** Late Show with David Letterman [illegible] **1.00am** In the Heat of the Night [illegible] **2.00** Long Play [illegible]

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. [illegible] £2.99 per viewing.
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 26): **The Glimmer Man (1996)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60): **Jingle All the Way (1996)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 58): **JUDGEMENT NIGHT USA** Live coverage from **8pm** [illegible]
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 52): **The Long Kiss Goodnight (1996)**

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 1

6.05am The Honey Pot (1967) [illegible] **8.20 Guarding Tess (1995)** [illegible] **9.50 Picnic at Hanging Rock (1975)** [illegible] **11.50 Soul of the Game (1996)** [illegible] **1.20pm Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll (1987)** [illegible] **3.20 Agatha Christie's Murder with Mirrors (1985)** [illegible] **5.00 Soul of the Game (1996)** [illegible] **7.00 Miracle on 34th Street (1994)** [illegible] **9.00 Heaven's Prisoners (1996)** [illegible] **11.10 The Movie Show** [illegible] **11.40 Night Eyes Three (1993)** [illegible] **1.25am The Good Son (1993)** [illegible] **2.50 Once Were Warriors (1994)** [illegible] **4.30 Crazy Horse (1996)** [illegible]

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 2

6.00am Snow White and the Three Stooges (1961) (38548) **8.00 Munchie Strikes Back (1995)** (59722) **10.00 Time Warrior: Journey to the Magic Cavern (1995)** (44703) **12.00 A Tree Grows in Brooklyn (1945)** (53031906) **2.10pm Christmas Every Day (1996)** (889797) **4.00 Snow White and the Three Stooges (1961)** (6971) **6.00 Invisible Mom (1995)** (24109) **8.00 Her Desperate Choice (1995)** (12857) **10.05 The Juror (1996)** (34833190) **12.10am The Titanic (1996)** (21046778) **2.40 Lord of Illusions (1995)** (930827) ***4.40 The Dragon That Wasn't, or Was He?*** **U** (7344846)

SKY MOVIES GOLD

4.00pm West Side Story (1961) (3209513) **6.30 Another Woman (1988)** (4053277) **8.00 Rocky IV (1985)** (4935987) **10.00 Candyman (1992)** (8150819) **11.40 Kung Fu (1971)** (3326884) **12.55am You Were Never Lovelier (1942)** (5117117) **2.35 Zorba the Greek (1964)** (80791846)

TNT

8.00pm WCW Nitro (56612074) **9.00 Where Eagles Dare (1969)** (58715093) **11.45 Sergeant York (1941)** (95726074) **2.15am Where Eagles Dare (1969)** (15849907) **5.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre (21451) **7.30** Wrestling (18277) **8.30** Sports Centre (45513) **9.00** Racing News (32093) **9.30** Aerobics (72155) **10.00** Spanish Primera Liga (65819) **12.00** Aerobics (29529) **12.30pm** Big Fight Countdown (76971) **1.00** World Sport Special (20722) **1.30** Extreme Sport (75242) **2.00** Pool: Mosconi Cup — Live (600451) **5.00** Extreme Sport (2364) **5.30** Big Fight Countdown (7548) **6.00** Sports Centre (57890) **7.00** Big Fight Countdown (9600) **7.30** Pool: Mosconi Cup — Live (722971) **10.00** Sports Centre (30548) **11.00** Hold the Back Page (34971) **12.00** Sports Centre (20204) **1.00am** Wrestling (56662) **3.00** NHL Powerweek (72575) **4.00** Hold the Back Page (52907) **5.00** Sports Centre (38001)

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics (9639722) **7.30** Sports Centre (9625529) **8.00** Racing News (5388884) **8.30** Tight Lines (8043398) **9.30** The Rugby Club (2340987) **11.00** Rebel Sports (9634277) **12.00** Formula One Powerboats (5381971) **12.30pm** The Rugby Club (2359616) **2.00** Iron Woman Devondale (2031703) **2.30** World of Sailing (6636180) **3.00** Big Fight Countdown (2050838) **3.30** Trans World Sport (2390635) **4.30** Powerboat and Jetski World (6623616) **5.00** BMX (2034890) **6.00** High 5 (6644109) **6.30** World Sport Special (6628161) **7.00** Fulham v Burnley — Live (6510890) **10.00** NHL Powerweek (2442426) **11.00** Trans World Sport (9542242) **12.00** BMX (4990020) **1.00am** High 5 (9548049) **1.30** Extreme Sport (4648846) **2.00** Sports Centre (3261407) **3.00** Football (7811385)

SKY SPORTS 3

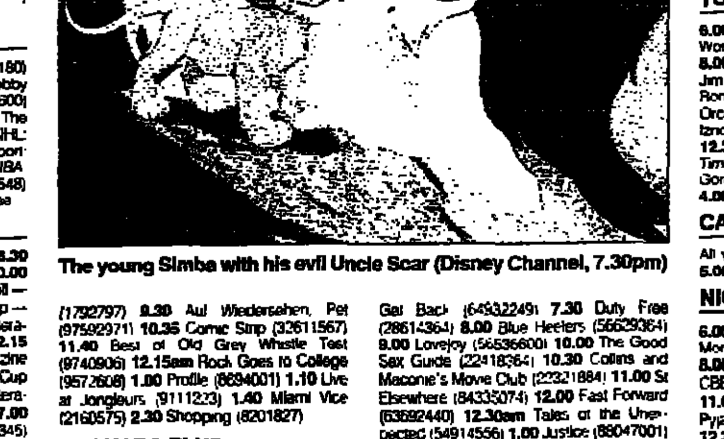
12.00pm Trans World Sport (81371180) **1.00** Tight Lines (81284600) **2.00** Bobby Charlton's Football Scrapbook (32378600) **3.30** NHL Powerweek (63828277) **4.30** The Rugby Club (54020161) **6.00** NHL Powerweek (81377364) **7.00** Motorsport: Porsche Super Cup (56532884) ***8.00 NBA*** Chicago Bulls v La Lakers (56625548) **10.00** Wrestling (35625345) **12.00** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Motors Magazine (61695) **8.30** Biathlon World Cup — Live (54451) **10.00** Skiing, Women's World Cup Downhill — *Live (73161)* **11.30** Biathlon World Cup — Live (8023277) **12.15pm** FIFA Confederations Cup Semi-Final — Live (590628) **2.15** International Motorsports Magazine (224616) **3.15** Skiing: Women's World Cup Downhill (4943726) **4.00** FIFA Confederations Cup Semi-Final — Live (419155) **7.00** World Supercross Championship (26345) **8.00** Sports Car (35093) **9.00** Olympia International — Live (16426) **10.30** Football (46190) **12.30am** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Bullseye (4366703) **7.35** Neighbours (4086068) **8.00** Crossroads (2224277) **8.25** EastEnders (6791242) **9.00** The Bill (6990600) **9.30** Howards' Way (9200242) **10.00** Bless This House (1441703) **10.30** Sullivans (6996884) **11.00** Boon (6096890) **12.00** Crossroads (46150635) **12.25** Neighbours (46153722) **12.55** EastEnders (2084432) **1.30** Hi-De-Hi (4279451) **2.10** Keeping Up Appearances (6549093) **2.50** Last of the Summer Wine (3242884) **3.30** The Bill (3842548) **4.00** Juliet Bravo (38674345) **5.05** EastEnders (1138635) **5.40** Full House (5201068) **6.20** That's Showbusiness (8537695) **7.00** Last of the Summer Wine (1477613) **7.45** Are You Being Served? (8842600) **8.20** Keeping Up Appearances (8429001) **9.00** The Bill (1792797) **9.30** Auf Wiedersehen, Pet (97592971) **10.35** Comic Strip (32611567) **11.40** Best of Old Grey Whistle Test (9740906) **12.15am** Rock Goes to College (9572608) **1.00** Profile (8694001) **1.10** Live at Jongleurs (9111223) **1.40** Miami Vice (2160575) **2.30** Shopping (8201827)



The young Simba with his evil Uncle Scar (Disney Channel, 7.30pm)

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am The Box (8073258) **7.00** Coronation St (6317513) **7.30** Families (6409548) **8.00** Blind Date (6023667) **9.00** Within These Walls (4965838) **10.00** Donahue (6498432) **11.00** Hart to Hart (6312068) **12.00** Coronation St (8821890) **12.30pm** Families (2391345) **1.00** On the Buses (8316884) **1.30** Please Sir! (2390616) **2.00** The Good Guys (7904906) **3.00** Donahue (7138548) **4.00** Mission: Impossible (7044155) **5.00** Hawaii Five-O (3985161) **6.00** Families (7258722) **6.30** Coronation St (7249074) **7.00** Blind Date (6783655) **8.00** Hart to Hart (9632613) **9.00** Coronation St (7146567) **9.30** Hale and Pace (2311109) **10.00** Hawaii Five-O (1331646) **11.00** Close

CARLTON SELECT (cable)

5.00pm Gridlock (23386105) **5.30** Hey Dad II (28604987) **6.00** Blockbusters (28521600) **6.30** A Country Practice (28618180) **7.00** Get Back (64932249) **7.30** Duty Free (28614364) **8.00** Blue Heelers (56629364) **9.00** Lovejoy (56536600) **10.00** The Good Sex Guide (22418364) **10.30** Collins and Maconie's Movie Club (22321884) **11.00** St Elsewhere (84335074) **12.00** Fast Forward (63692440) **12.30am** Tales of the Unexpected (54914556) **1.00** Justice (88047001)

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Under the Umbrella Tree **6.30** Rosie and Jim **6.45** Winnie the Pooh **7.00** Aladdin, The Series **7.30** Tex Avery **8.00** Dinosaurs **8.30** Bonkers **9.00** Gummi Bears **9.30** Chip 'n' Dale Rescue Rangers **9.55** Small Stories **10.00** Sesame Street **11.00** Winnie the Pooh **11.15** Rosie and Jim **11.35** Sing Me a Story with Belle **12.00** Tots TV **12.45pm** Winnie the Pooh **1.00** Sesame Street **2.00** Amazing Animals **2.30** Gummi Bears **3.00** Tale Spin **3.30** Goof Troop **4.00** Timon and Pumbaa **4.30** Recess **5.00** Brand Spanking New Doug **5.30** Pepper Ann **6.00** Nightmare Ned **6.30** Smart Guy **7.00** The Wayne Manifesto **7.30** FILM: *The Lion King* **9.00** Second Noah **10.00** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Delfy and His Friends **6.30** Billy the Cat **7.00** Pinocchio **7.30** Power Rangers Zeo **8.00** Big Bad Beetleborgs **8.30** Masked Rider **9.00** The Magic Box **9.30** Dudley the Dragon **10.00** Inspector Gadget **10.30** Samurai Pizza Cats **11.00** Sweet Valley High **12.00** Ace Ventura **12.30pm** Casper **1.00** The Tick **1.30** Iron Man **2.00** Fantastic Four **2.30** Power Rangers Zeo **3.00** Big Bad Beetleborgs **3.30** Masked Rider **4.00** Ace Ventura **4.30** Casper **5.00** The Tick **5.30** X Men **6.00** Spiderman **6.30** Sweet Valley High **7.00** Close

TCC

6.00am Happily Ever After **6.30** Bobby's World **7.00** Spirou **7.30** Dennis the Menace **8.00** Batman **8.30** Batman **9.00** Earthworm Jim **9.30** Romuald the Reindeer **9.45** Romuald the Reindeer **10.00** Oscar's Orchestra **10.30** Flash Gordon **11.00** Iznogoud **11.30** Gigantor **12.00** Spirou **12.30pm** Sonic **1.00** Batman **1.30** AJ's *Time Travellers* **2.00** Iznogoud **2.30** Flash Gordon **3.00** Sonic **3.30** Earthworm Jim **4.00** Dennis the Menace **4.30** Batman

CARTOON NETWORK

All your favourite cartoons broadcast from **5.00am** to **9.00pm**, seven days a week.

NICKELODEON

6.00am Killer Tomatoes **6.30** Aaahh! Real Monsters **7.00** Hey Arnold! **7.30** Rugrats **8.00** Doug **8.30** Neverending Story **9.00** CBBC **10.00** Wimzie's House **10.30** Babar **11.00** Magic School Bus **11.30** Bananas in Pyjamas **12.00** Paddington Bear etc **12.30pm** Little Red Tractor etc **1.00** Dr Seuss **1.30** Little Bear Stories **2.00** Animal Show **2.30** CBBC **3.30** Rocko/Doug **4.00** Angry Beavers **4.30** Rugrats **5.00** Sister Sister **5.30** Kenan and Kel **6.00** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **6.30** Moesha **7.00** Close

TROUBLE

12.00pm Swan's Crossing **12.30** Ready or Not **1.00** Madison **1.30** California Dreams **2.00** Saved by the Bell **2.30** Swan's Crossing **3.00** No Naked Flames **3.30** Ready or Not **4.00** Saved by the Bell **4.30** USA High **5.00** Hangtime **5.30** California Dreams **6.00** Blast **6.30** Madison **7.00** Hangtime **7.30** USA High **8.00** Close

CHALLENGE TV

5.00pm Cross Wits **5.30** Move on Up **6.00** Family Fortunes **6.30** Catchphrase **7.15** The $64,000 Question **8.00** Split Second **8.30** Karaoke Challenge **9.15** Winner Takes All **10.00** Treasure Hunt **11.15** Karaoke Challenge **12.00** Say the Word **12.30am** Hart to Hart **1.30** The Big Valley **2.30** National Geographic Explorer **3.30** Me and the Boys **4.00** Aliens Next Door **4.30** *Jingle Bell Rap* **5.00** *Screenshop*

BRAVO

8.00pm The A-Team (4749155) **9.00** Tour of Duty (4832819) **10.00** The Red Shoe Diaries (5924364) **10.45 FILM: Good Cop, Bad Cop (1993)** (9809451) **12.45am** Beverly Hills Bordello (5324759) **1.15** The Red Shoe Diaries (2314020) **2.00** Beverly Hills Bordello (3331597) **2.30 FILM: The Vampire Lovers (1971)** (2798730) **4.30** Family Dog (5938371) **5.00** Starsky and Hutch (5520049)

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Grace Under Fire (7242) **7.30** Roseanne (5567) **8.00** Ellen (9890) **8.30** Cybill (2797) ***9.00*** *Cheers (11971)* ***9.30*** *Taxi (67277)* **10.00** Monty Python Live at the Hollywood Bowl (56722) **11.30** Ellen (58141) **12.00** Roseanne (89372) **12.30am** Nightstand (73223) **1.00** Soap (46339) **1.30** Taxi (52488) **2.00** Paramount Presents (81575) **2.30** Grace Under Fire (93310) **3.00** Cybill (26575) **3.30** The Kenny Everett Show (84682) **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

8.00pm Sightings (3944074) **9.00 FILM: The Torture Garden (1968)** (3947161) **11.00** Friday the 13th (6256819) **12.00** Sightings (8588448) **1.00am** The Twilight Zone (9454661) **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected (3266391) **2.00** Dark Shadows (7388662) **2.30** New Alfred Hitchcock (7374469) **3.00** Friday the 13th (9166001) **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

9.00am The Joy of Painting **9.30** Gardeners' Diary **10.00** Garden Party **10.30** New Yankee Workshop **11.00** Hooked on Fishing **11.30** Hometime **12.00** The Diceman **12.30pm** Hammer it Home **1.00** Yan Can Cook **1.30** Collectomania **2.00** Furniture on the Mend **2.30** Antiques Trail **3.00** Two's Country **3.30** Home Again **4.00** Close

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Bush Tucker Man (3756797) **4.30** Flightline (3959109) **5.00** Ancient Warriors (8076567) **5.30** Beyond 2000 (3552161) **6.00** Untamed Amazonia (9390819) **7.00** Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious World (8056703) **7.30** Disaster (3659838) **8.00** Meerkats: Cohort of the Kalahari (4825529) **9.00** Forensic Detectives (4838093) **10.00** Medical Detectives (6082635) **10.30** Medical Detectives (6995155) **11.00** Weapons of War (8911797) **12.00** *The Diceman* (7141643) **12.30am** Wheel Nuts (7752223) **1.00** Disaster (6588010) **1.30** Beyond 2000 (9744827) **2.00** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm Explorer (8718109) **8.00** African Odyssey (8794529) **9.00** Flight Over Africa (8707093) **10.00** Brutal Kinship (9700180) **11.00** After the Hurricanes (9730426) **11.30** Can't Drown This Town (7595919) **12.00** Explorer (2596778) **1.00am** Close

TRAVEL (cable)

12.00pm Rolf's Indian Walkabout **1.00** A-Z Med **1.30** Across the Line **2.00** Cities of the World **2.30** Gatherings and Celebrations ***3.00*** *Portrait of Ireland* ***3.30*** *Railway Adventures Across Europe* **4.00** Around Britain **4.30** Greg's World **5.00** Wet and Wild **5.30** Reel World **6.00** The Flavours of France **6.30** On the Horizon **7.00** Going Places **8.00** No Truckin' Holiday **8.30** Sports Safaris **9.00** Scandinavian Summers **10.00** Gatherings and Celebrations **10.30** On Tour **11.00** Travel Live **12.00** Close

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

4.00pm Weapons at War (9721399) **5.00** Ancient Mysteries (5475364) **7.00** Biography: Solomon and Sheba (2443155) **8.00** Close

CARLTON FOOD (cable)

12.00pm Food Network Daily **12.30** Jane Asher's Twelve Days of Christmas **1.00** Food for Thought **1.30** Twelve Chefs of Christmas **2.00** Hudson and Halls **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** French Lunch **3.30** Graham Kerr's Kitchen **4.00** Ideal Home Cooks **4.30** Planet Nosh **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Tiny Living **9.00** Why Me? **9.30** The Gordon Elliott Show **10.10** Jerry Springer **11.00** The Young and the Restless **11.55** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **12.25pm** Jimmy's **1.00** Cheap Chic **1.30** Ready, Steady, Cook **2.05** Hart to Hart **3.00** Live at Three **4.10** Jerry Springer **5.00** Rolonda **5.50** Cheap Chic **6.20** Ready, Steady, Cook **7.00** Rescue 911 **7.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **8.00** Adrenalin Junkies **9.00** **FILM: She-Devil** **10.55** Sex Life **11.30** More Sex Life **12.00** Close

EQUESTRIANISM 44
Showtime lights up opening day at Olympia

SPORT

BOXING 46
Hamed's backers left to wait for audience reaction

Hollioake confident of tour de force in Champions Trophy final

England wary of Lara's threat

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SHARJAH

ONE more river to cross, one more match to play, and England can return home for Christmas satisfied with a job well done. They must be considered favourites to beat West Indies in the final of the Champions Trophy today because they have won their three matches to get there. But it would be wise to tread carefully in case the Lara volcano discharges lava across the outfield.

In short order, England have beaten India, West Indies and Pakistan and showed that they can defend a total as well as chase one. The batting is functioning reasonably, the bowling has been disciplined, the fielding excellent and the spirit in the side is worth an extra player. They are ready for this match and will not be too disappointed that West Indies are their opponents.

Adam Hollioake, who will be confirmed as captain for the last leg of the West Indies tour sometime next week, cut a confident figure yesterday. He knows he has good men under his command who can be trusted not to fold under pressure, and knows also that the force is with England, who came here largely unheralded but who have impressed everybody with the thoroughness of their cricket.

Victory today would not prepare the ground for the tour of the West Indies, which starts next month, but it would remind people that England are not the international doormats on whom every team wipes its feet. Furthermore, if the five men who go on from this tournament to the Caribbean take with them something of the purpose and unity that has been so apparent here, England will go into the Test series feeling ten feet tall.

Hollioake thought it was "the duty of the five players who are here to take that positive thinking to the West Indies". He said: "There is no reason why the attitude we have shown here should not be carried on there." Praising the spirit in the side, he said it had been a doddle to lead.

England will probably field the team that has won the three matches to date, although Ashley Giles, the Warwickshire left-arm spinner, might get a game if a second slow bowler is required. West Indies played three spinners against India and they took all the wickets that fell to bowlers. Pakistan fielded four against England, three of them wrist spinners. On these turning pitches, the back-of-the-hand bowler who uses the rough outside the right-hander's leg stump presents quite a challenge and West Indies have one in Rawl Lewis.

Because England have been so successful it has not proved possible to give games to Giles, Ben Hollioake or Peter Martin. "After the first match we were in a situation where we wanted to keep the same side and when we won again it became difficult to chuck the others into the heat of battle," Adam Hollioake said. "There are no games in between to find out if they are in form or out of form, so you're better off sticking with what you know."

The captain is aware that the middle order needs to make more runs. "I've made the mistake of playing as I would do in England and I've been caught on the boundary a couple of times," he said. "I realise now that it was a mistake to attack as soon as I came in." Only Stewart, the player of the tournament, has succeeded in taking the bowlers on.

Somehow, England are finding enough runs to win, and there must be a good chance that Hick or Thorpe will explode today. They may have to, because Lara is due a big innings and, in this form of cricket, Hooper is a handy batsman.

How many people will attend the final is hard to gauge. The local support for India and Pakistan is enormous, but there should be a few more expatriate English folk on the ground than have been seen so far. The England team may have noted that when the Indians went home yesterday, their tails between their legs, the selectors promptly dropped six players for the forthcoming one-day matches against Sri Lanka and admonished Mohammad Azharuddin, the previous captain, for not doing his best. Whatever happens today, England have certainly done their best this week. All they have to do now is win.

ENGLAND (probable): A J Hollioake (captain), A D Brown, A J Stewart, N V Knight, G A Hick, G P Thorpe, M A Ealham, D R Brown, M V Fleming, R D B Croft, D W Headley

WEST INDIES (probable): C A Walsh (captain), S C Williams, P A Wallace, B C Lara, S Chanderpaul, C L Hooper, P V Simmons, D Williams, R N Lewis, F A Rose, M V Dillon

David Lloyd, the England coach, watches Adam Hollioake practise before the match against West Indies today. Photograph: Ian Waldie

Optimism of holders is shattered by Australia

NAGPUR (England won toss): Australia beat England by eight wickets

FROM THRASY PETROPOULOS IN NAGPUR

THE England women's team suffered a rude awakening in the World Cup yesterday when Australia dismissed them for 95 with a ruthless exhibition of the standard of play that is required if they are to harbour any hopes of retaining their world crown.

Four successive victories by England may have been beneficial for confidence, but it was obvious that they were unprepared for the speed and intensity with which Australia play their cricket.

The dismissal of Charlotte Edwards, whose background in boys' cricket should have prepared her for genuine pace bowling, set the tone for the England innings. Edwards barely laid bat on ball before she was bowled without scoring, beaten as much for pace as movement off the pitch by Catherine Fitzpatrick.

For a while, Jan Brittin and Barbara Daniels repelled the onslaught, but Brittin was bowled by Mason, and Daniels gave her wicket away, pulling a long hop from Olivia Magno straight to backward square-leg.

That wicket was the start of an extraordinary spell by Magno, the leg spinner, which saw her take four wickets for ten runs in nine overs. Magno started with an attacking field of slip, gully and silly point, but so hypnotised were the players by the combination of flight and control that she was still able to dictate terms.

The dismissal of Clare Connor was indicative of England's batting. When Fitzpatrick was brought back in the 42nd over, Connor stepped away and exposed all three stumps to a straight ball. Melissa Reynard at least showed what could be done by hitting three defiant boundaries late in the innings before holing out to mid-off.

Australia then showed the wicket held no demons by reaching their target for the loss of only two wickets, although the England bowlers gave a decent account of themselves. Karen Smithies, the England captain, said: "We didn't really apply ourselves here. We knew it would be very, very different from the last three games. It needed someone to be watchful and get used to the pace of the ball, which no one really did."

Both teams were already assured of their quarter-final places, but the result means that Australia will play in Lucknow tomorrow and England are in Chandigarh on Sunday. They will face either Sri Lanka or Holland, though it was uncertain who will play whom because Sri Lanka and Holland finished equal on points in pool B and the organisers have yet to announce the final placings.

SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND

C Edwards b Fitzpatrick	0
J Brittin b Mason	7
B Daniels c Calver b Magno	23
S Metcalfe c and b Magno	14
†J Cassar run out	1
*K Smithies b Magno	2
K Lang lbw b Magno	0
M Reynard c Rolton b Fitzpatrick	23
C Connor b Fitzpatrick	1
S Redfern run out	2
C Taylor not out	0
Extras (b 5, lb 4, w 13)	22
Total (49.4 overs)	95

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-4, 2-30, 3-39, 4-45, 5-54, 6-58, 7-59, 8-74, 9-85

BOWLING: Fitzpatrick 9.4-3-25-3, Calver 8-3-11-0; Mason 10-3-22-1; Fahey 10-3-13-0; Magno 9-5-10-4, Rolton 3-1-5-0

AUSTRALIA

*B Clark c Brittin b Reynard	40
J Broadbent c Cassar b Taylor	1
M Goszko not out	51
K Rolton not out	4
Total (2 wkts, 27.5 overs)	96

M Jonas, B Calver, †J Price, O Magno, A Fahey, C Fitzpatrick and C Mason did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-3, 2-59.

BOWLING: Taylor 9-1-20-1; Smithies 9.5-1-34-0; Reynard 6-0-26-1; Lang 3-0-16-0

Umpires: Sunes Phadkar and D K Iyar.

Hoddle welcomes Wembley visitors

BY MATT DICKINSON

THE World Cup may be six months away, but Glenn Hoddle can already be satisfied with his preparations. The Football Association confirmed last night that Chile and Saudi Arabia will be two of England's opponents in the build-up to France 98 and for Hoddle, the coach, that already represents a minor victory.

He believes that the two countries will provide a similar challenge to that which his team will face in group G from Colombia and Tunisia respectively. "We are looking to develop a balanced and helpful fixture list between now and the start of the World Cup, and both Chile and Saudi Arabia have qualified for France," Hoddle said.

"Chile are clearly similar in style to Colombia and the same can be said of Saudi Arabia in comparison with Tunisia. We have other fixtures to confirm, notably in March, April and the end of May but, so far, I am pleased with the progress."

Chile will provide England's next opponents, at Wembley on February 11. The South Americans, drawn against Italy, Cameroon and Austria in the finals, are likely to feature Ivan Zamorano, the Internazionale forward, and Marcello Salas, the River Plate forward, who now looks destined to join his compatriot in Serie A after Manchester United's decision to withdraw their interest in him.

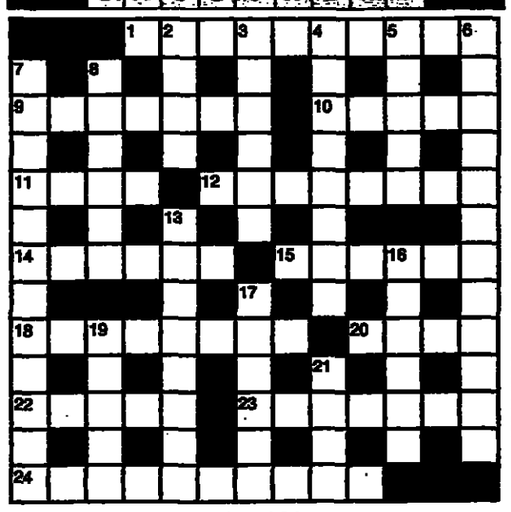
On May 23, Saudi Arabia will provide England's final opponents on home soil before they leave the country to begin their final preparations for the tournament. Saudi Arabia are in the same group as France, South Africa and Denmark.

Hoddle has yet to decide whether England will head straight from London to Morocco for a four-team tournament the following week. However, it seems increasingly likely that England's preparations will conclude with a spell in Spain or Portugal, with the La Manga golf resort in Spain a possible destination.

The Football Association is in discussion with the Portuguese FA about a possible match in Lisbon.

Owen warned, page 44
Pleat summoned, page 44

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1281

ACROSS
1 Trifling fault (10)
9 Friendly (7)
10 Film (5)
11 Show resentment (4)
12 Unmarried woman (8)
14 Constricted (6)
15 Flushed; very busy (6)
18 Naughty behaviour (8)
20 (Cap) peak; (glass) be full (4)
22 Month to be in England (*Browning*) (5)
23 Tumultuous reception (7)
24 One keen to secede (10)

DOWN
2 Napoleon exile island (4)
3 Eerie (6)
4 Insane (8)
5 Tweed greenish mixture (5)
6 Obsessed brain (3-5,4)
7 Gov't revenue-raising (4,3,5)
8 Supporting column (6)
13 Caver (8)
16 Sluggish, dormant (6)
17 Rebellion (6)
19 Belt for fastening (5)
21 Succeed in (exam); free-entry ticket (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1280

ACROSS: 1 Pop-up 7 Artisan 8 Valiant 9 Spinach 11 Detour 13 Pizzicato 15 Crocodile 19 Engels 21 Mattins 23 Hurdler 24 Mulatto 25 Pep up

DOWN: 1 Paved 2 Palate 3 Play up 4 Pats 5 Picnic 6 Paucity 10 Puzzle 12 Ridden 14 Break up 16 Catnap 17 Entrap 18 Dewlap 20 Scrap 22 Shop

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Baker-Finch hits new low

John Hopkins offers sympathetic advice to the tormented 1991 Open champion

One of the glories of golf is that it is a game that can be played in the head as well as on the ground. You can envisage a round of golf in the mind's eye before dropping off to sleep just as easily as you can play 18 holes and win or lose a friendly side bet to a playing partner.

But, therein lies the rub. Because golf can be played so vividly in the mind, it can become a form of mental torture. Your results on a golf course often depend on your state of mind off it.

Just ask Ian Baker-Finch, the 1991 Open champion. Or rather, do not: he has had enough. Baker-Finch's form spectacularly left him in 1993 and, since then, he has managed to play all four rounds in only three out of 22 tournaments in Australia. In this time, he has won less than £2,000.

When he came to Britain, he was just as bad. Never to be forgotten by anyone who saw it was his round of 92 at Royal Troon in the Open Championship this year, but because he had competed with some success in several pro-ams in Queensland recently, Baker-Finch was tempted back into competition at Coolum, near Brisbane yesterday.

Baker-Finch: agony

The Australian thought he had built up defences that were impenetrable even by the insidious imposters known as uncertainty and anxiety. He was being optimistic. If it takes time for scars on the body to heal, then it must for scars on the mind to do the same.

In the first round, Baker-Finch disqualified himself after he had played eight holes and was already six over par. Having hit two balls into water on his ninth hole, he lost his temper and railed at journalists for wanting to watch him instead of someone playing well.

"People are sick of hearing what I had," Baker-Finch said. "They want to know what the good scores are. I came here to have some fun this week and play with a mate, but you just couldn't leave me alone. I am not really well enough to play professionally. It's no fun." If golf is no fun, then the best thing to do is to stop playing. Every amateur knows that.

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